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17 Mar Middle East and South Asia Review

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NOTICE: FBIS wishes to advise that resource constraints will compel discontinuation of the Middle East and South Asia Review effective 1 April.

[Editorial Report]

Lebanon

A car bomb exploded near a bakery in the suburbs of East Beirut 17 March, killing 10 people and wounding 60 others, Voice of Lebanon radio announced. The explosion occurred near the British Embassy, which was "heavily damaged."

Earlier, Beirut radio cited a UAE press report that two American military experts were wounded during the shelling of the Defense Ministry in Al-Yarzah on 14 March. AL-ITTIHAD said they were among a group of seven U.S. experts who are supervising the training of Lebanese Army artillery units.

The clandestine Radio Free Lebanon reported that the combat lines in and around Beirut were calm 17 March after clashes the previous afternoon and evening. The Syrians and their allies have reinforced their positions in West Beirut and other areas, the radio said.

Afghanistan

A military source cited by Kabul radio stated that the Armed Forces repulsed the attack on Jalalabad airport, killing some 475 "extremists" and "Pakistani collaborators." The joint enemy forces attacked the airport "from a different direction" backed by "thousands" of rounds of shells and rockets, but government forces "resolutely defended" their positions and pushed the attackers back "in some areas."

An Afghan officer cited by TASS claimed that rebel losses since the start of the 10-day-old offensive on Jalalabad have reached 4,500 dead and over 2,000 wounded, and he added that the Afghan Army remains "completely in control" of the situation around the city. The officer also told journalists that the Afghan Army chief of staff has gone to Jalalabad to supervise the defense of the city, according to AFP.

The Soviet ambassador to Kabul, Yuliy Vorontsov, held a news conference in which he warned that Pakistan's "interference" in Afghanistan may trigger a war between Afghanistan and Pakistan, Moscow radio reported.

Meanwhile, Kabul radio announced that 10 people were killed and 5 wounded when "criminal extremists" fired 6 surface-to-surface missiles at residential areas of the capital.

In western Afghanistan, some 1,500 militiamen have defected from the government side and joined the mujahidin in Herat Province, according to IRNA.

ICO Conference

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal announced that the conference has endorsed a resolution granting Afghanistan's ICO seat to the provisional government established by the mujahidin, SPA reported. The seat was occupied by the provisional government's foreign minister, Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, who told the conference in a speech carried by SPA that the mujahidin intend to declare a general amnesty to their opponents if and when they take power in Afghanistan. The mujahidin will guarantee the safety of those who lay down their arms and renounce their enmity to Islam, he added. A mujahidin government in Kabul will also seek cordial and good relations with all states of the world on the basis of equality, mutual respect, and noninterference, Hikmatyar said. He indicated that this will include the USSR, though the latter must pay "just reparations" for losses resulting from its "aggression." As for the ICO's "just and courageous" decision to admit the mujahidin government, Hikmatyar told SPA that this is a "collective recognition" of the provisional government by Islamic states and a signal to the Najibullah government that "the world has written it off."

Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal made a speech at the session in which he viewed the decision on Afghanistan's seat as the "primary achievement" of the conference, SPA noted. Welcoming Hikmatyar's "positive stand" toward the Soviet Union, the Saudi minister urged the latter to "accept the hand of peace of the Afghan mujahidin."

In a separate development, Tehran television reported that the ICO issued an "extraordinary statement" condemning "The Satanic Verses" and branding its author, Salman Rushdie, an "apostate." The statement reportedly calls on ICO members to ban the book and prevent Rushdie from entering Islamic countries. It also urges all members of the international community to prevent the sale and distribution of the book, and to introduce legislation aimed at protecting religious beliefs.

The lengthy conference resolutions, carried by SPA, included a declaration of "joint Islamic action" to combat blasphemy, condemned "The Satanic Verses," and described its author as a "heretic."

Israel

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir met with influential notables from the territories to seek a way toward direct negotiations with Palestinians who do not belong to the PLO, Jerusalem television reported. The meetings were held in strict secrecy and Shamir's media adviser refused to disclose the names of the Palestinians involved.

Labor Party ministers, however, believe there is no real chance of launching negotiations with Palestinians in the territories without prior approval from the PLO, the television added. It broadcast remarks by Finance Minister Shim'on Peres in which he indicated that he does not oppose talking with Palestinians who identify with the PLO's views. "The only thing we forbid is for them to attempt to cause us harm," the Labor leader added.

In contrast, Foreign Minister Moshe Arens told Jerusalem radio he is "almost certain" that Israel can find Palestinian leaders who are willing to hold negotiations without PLO approval. As for relations with the United States over the Palestinian issue, Arens stressed that there is "no crisis" and "no misunderstanding" between the two countries.

Commenting on relations with Egypt in an interview with Jerusalem television, Prime Minister Shamir asserted that Egypt has "lost the momentum to make any advance in developing and promoting peace with Israel." He urged the Egyptians to begin "normal relations without any reservations" with Israel, and stressed that the development of relations should not be linked with progress in solving the Palestinian issue. He deplored the fact that arrangements for a meeting with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak have become a subject of bargaining between the two countries.

The Egyptian ambassador to Israel told Jerusalem radio's Arabic service that a Shamir-Mubarak summit will be fruitful if Israel is prepared to achieve peace through an international conference and on the basis of territory for peace.

Syrian-Libyan Summit

Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad arrived in Banghazi, Libya, where he was received by Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi and other Libyan officials, Damascus radio reported. Al-Asad told journalists on his arrival that he is confident the visit will lead to unified opinions as "we were scarcely in disagreement in the past." He also stressed that there will be "no normal life" for the Arabs without unity.

Talks between Al-Asad and Al-Qadhdhafi focused on the regional situation and on ways to rally resources to defend the Arab nation's interests, Damascus television reported.

Iran

Moscow Visit—Deputy Foreign Minister Hoseyn Lavasani flew to Moscow for talks with high-ranking Soviet officials on bilateral relations and other issues, IRNA noted.

Letter to UN—Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati recently sent a letter to the UN secretary general urging him to take action to force Iraq to withdraw its forces from Iranian territory, IRNA reported.

Loans—In remarks reported by Tehran radio, President 'Ali Khamene'i indicated that all the Iranian leaders oppose seeking foreign loans, but he said Iran can accept help from other countries without incurring foreign debts.

Islamic Affairs

Further Reportage on ICO Conference Proceedings

Turkey's Yilmaz on Afghanistan

LD1203102789 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0805 GMT 12 Mar 89

[Text] Riyadh, 12 Mar (SPA)—Turkey has welcomed the decision of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to recognize the provisional government of the Afghan mujahidin.

This was pointed out in a statement by His Excellency Mesut Yilmaz, the Turkish minister of foreign affairs, on his arrival in Riyadh last night. He has come to head his country's delegation to the 18th conference of foreign ministers of Islamic states, which will commence tomorrow, Monday.

The Turkish minister expressed his country's joy over the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghan territories. He said: "Turkey is closely following developments in Afghanistan, and we will also work for solidarity with the other countries in this regard."

He also expressed his conviction that holding the conference of foreign ministers of Islamic states constitutes an important and valuable step toward the consolidation of Islamic solidarity and cooperation.

Mesut Yilmaz said: "We hope the conference will be able to issue decisions and recommendations that are up to the aspirations of our Islamic nation."

The Turkish minister of foreign affairs continued saying that the Kingdom, under the leadership of the custodian of the two holy Mosques, King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-Aziz, has continued its efforts for the sake of Islamic causes, and thinks that its hosting of this conference once again shows its contribution in support of these issues.

He indicated that the conference would tackle important economic issues facing many member-states, in addition to international issues of special interest to Turkey, such as the fate of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria and also the issue of the Turkish Cypriots.

In reply to a question on whether Iran will attend the conference, the Turkish foreign minister said: "Their preliminary mission was indeed here and they said that they were returning to hold consultations and they would come back...this is the only information available."

Chairman Reports ICO Work

LD1603111189 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1843 GMT 15 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Riyadh, 15 Mar SPA—His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-FAysal, the foreign minister and chairman of the 18th ICO foreign ministerial conference, and His Excellency the ICO secretary General Dr Hamid al-Ghabid, held a press conference this evening at the conference information center at the Riyadh Mariott Hotel. His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal began the conference with a speech in which he said:

This evening, I should like to present a report on the work of the general assembly and the debates which took place in it, and then a preliminary report on the work of the two committees.

Regarding the general assembly, the interventions of their excellencies, the heads of the delegations of the participating countries, continued. A general discussion took place. This ended with the issuance of a statement concerning the fratricide taking place in Lebanon which has resulted in the death of hundreds of innocents. This statement was issued at the initiative of the Arab six-man League ministerial committee on Lebanon, headed by Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah. The statement was unanimously adopted by those present. Following is the text of the statement:

"The 18th Islamic Conference Organization (ICO) foreign ministerial conference, which is in session in Riyadh, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, during the period 6 - 9 Sha'ban 1409 AH, corresponding to 13-16 March 1989 AD, expresses its utmost concern over the deterioration of the situation in Lebanon. It also expresses extreme pain over the incidence of innocent casualties.

His royal highness said that this statement naturally expressed the conference participants' concern over the permanent hemorrhage in this member country, and their hope that the Lebanese brothers will respond to the committee's efforts.

As for the general assembly proceedings, they will start tomorrow morning at 0930. The assembly will review the results of the proceedings and debates of the subcommittees and the special committees and will review the final statement.

As for the framework of the proceedings of the committees, his royal highness explained that the political committee has nearly finished its review of the issues on its agenda. It will end its proceedings this evening, God willing. It adopted 33 draft resolutions today. It also adopted draft resolutions on the Palestinian people's uprising, on the occupied Syrian Arab Golan, on the holy city of Jerusalem, on the Jerusalem committee, on the Palestinian issue, and on the Israeli occupation of Lebanese lands.

As for the situation between Iran and Iraq, His royal highness said: Constructive discussions have prevailed at the highest level of responsibility, and in harmony with the spirit that dominated the discussion on this issue. The two sides have agreed, with the unanimity of the brother members, that the statement should be dealt with in order to underline the spirit and the positiveness of the discussions which took place. This should be dealt with in the final statement, and this positive spirit which prevailed at the discussions should be pointed out. This makes us optimistic, with God's will, that the efforts exerted by the UN secretary general in implementation of Resolution 598 will defuse [the situation] in the coming period when direct negotiations will take place, until, God willing, a permanent and just solution to this issue is reached, and peace and security are provided in the future, with God's will.

His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal pointed out that the committee adopted draft resolutions on the issue of Namibia; on the aparthied policy of the white minority regime in South Africa; on south Africa's policy of undermining the stability of the front-line states; and on Sudan's efforts to accomplish national unity, peace, and development, and to preserve its cultural and humanitarian [al-hadariy] heritage. The committee also adopted a draft resolution on the International Islamic Court of Justice and another on the proposed document on human rights in Islam.

His Royal Highness added that the political committee also adopted draft resolutions on the affairs of the Muslim communities in non-ICO member states, and others on the situation of Muslims in the southern Philippines.

Concerning informational matters, His royal highness pointed out that the political committee adopted a draft resolution delegating the ICO General Secretariat to follow up the decisions of the first Islamic information ministers' conference, and another draft emphasizing the need for the effective support and constructive participation of member states in the development of the ICO information plan and the approval of an action program for the year 1989. The conference reviewed with satisfaction the International Islamic News Agency report presented to the general secretariat and comprising the development work of the agency and its contacts with the other Islamic news agencies. It then approved a draft resolution concerning the International Islamic News Agency.

His royal highness said that the committee is now looking into the remaining draft resolutions concerning the subjects of the Muslim minority in Bulgaria; comprehensive disarmament; and the study of ways and means to confront the political and cultural invasion which is directed against the Islamic faith, world, and nation. This is as far as the work of the political committee is concerned.

Concerning the economic affairs committee, His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal said: The committee today concluded its work and turned the attention of the ministerial conference to a series of economic resolutions dealing with the following subjects.

First: The problems facing the Islamic world at the economic level. The committee recommended the adoption of two resolutions. The first is related to the international economic negotiations between the developing and developed countries, and the second is related to the follow up of the international attention to the environment issues. The committee recommended the adoption of resolutions on the economic problems of the less developed member countries, on the economic problems of the nonlittoral countries, on support for the member countries hit by drought and natural catastrophes, and on the dangers of locusts. The committee also recommended the adoption of two more resolutions: the first related to the special aid to Chad, and the other related to the urgent emergency aid to Sudan and Bangladesh.

Second: Cooperation in the field of maritime navigation. The committee recommended the adoption of a resolution on cooperation in fighting piracy and maritime fraud.

Third: The committee recommended the adoption of a resolution on Africa's foreign debts.

Fourth: The Committee recommended the adoption of a resolution between the Islamic countries in fighting epidemics, which includes measures to secure the safety of the pilgrims of God's holy houses.

Fifth: The Committee recommended the adoption of two resolutions concerning the recommendations appearing in the reports of the bodies which are working within the framework of the ICO and the organs which have branched off the ICO General Secretariat concerning the activities of these bodies and organs.

Sixth: The committee recommended adoption of the resolution concerning the current activities within the framework of the permanent committee on economic and commercial cooperation with the aim of implementing the economic actions plan which was approved by the third summit conference in Mecca.

His highness continued to say that the most important elements in the resolution were those which concerned strengthening commercial cooperation and particularly to declare the intent to set up a most favored trade system among member states and the facilities which are provided by the islamic Development Bank to finance trade and the measures that concern strengthening nutrition security in Islamic states. [passage omitted]

Kuwait's Shaykh Al-Sabah Speaks

LD1603112289 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0450 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Riyadh, 16 Mar (SPA)—The 18th ICO foreign ministerial session currently being held in Riyadh last night has unanimously approved the proposal of the Arab ministerial committee for contacts and good offices on an appeal from the conference to all parties in the Lebanese arena to exercise self restraint and to refrain from doing anything that might aggravate the security situation while fraternal efforts are being made to extract Lebanon from its predicament and to help all Lebanese to rebuild national accord.

Following the approval of this proposal by the conference, His Highness Shaykh al-Sabah al-Ahmad, Kuwait deputy prime minister and foreign minister and the chairman of the Arab Committee for contacts and good offices on Lebanon, addressed the conference. In the name of the members of the committee, he expressed his appreciation to the members of the conference for their quick response, which His Highness said truly reflects the extent of our follow-up of and interest in these regretable events surrounding fraternal Lebanon.

His highness added: "Lebanon is a member of our organization and has been torn by the civil war and its disastrous consequences over the last 14 years." Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad expressed his hope that this collective appeal will find its positive response from all warring and influential parties, so that the good efforts would be directed toward finding a formula that will pave the way toward national accord. He noted that there is no alternative to coexistance and accord but dismemberment and dispersal, "and this is what we are all trying to avoid," he added.

His highness expressed his wishes that God will retain Lebanon as a homeland to all its sons, so that it will always remain an example of coexistence and accord to carry out its expected humanitarian mission.

Conference Grants Afghan Seat

LD1603174689 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1703 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Riyadh, 16 Mar (SPA)—His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, foreign minister and chairman of the 18th ICO foreign ministers' conference, announced at the closed session held by the conference this evening that the conference endorsed the draft resolution granting Afghanistan's seat, which has been void for last 10 years, to the provisional government of the Afghan Mujahidin. His royal highness asked the foreign minister of the provisional government of the Afghan mujahidin to occupy the seat. Shaykh Hikmatyar occupied the seat.

Afghan Official Gives Speech

LD1603221589 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1828 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Riyadh, 16 Mar (SPA)—Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, foreign minister of the Afghan mujahidin government, said that the ICO's giving a seat to the Islamic state of Afghanistan has facilitated the way for the Islamic states to recognize the provisional government.

In a statement to SPA, he added at the end of the closed session of the 18th conference of Islamic foreign ministers this evening: There is no doubt that this is a collective recognition by the Islamic states who are ICO members.

Hikmatyar expressed hope that giving back its ICO seat to the Islamic state of Afghanistan will play a major role in solving the Afghan issue peacefully.

He said: We consider having acquired this seat as a signal to the government of Najibullah that the world has written it off and it should not try to remain in Kabul. He stated:

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Thanks be to God, and peace be on his chosen servants. God save me from the cursed devil. "Say: Work, and God will surely see your work, and his messenger, and the believers, and you will be returned to Him who knows the unseen and the visible, and He will tell you what you were doing" [Koranic verse] God has said the truth.

Mr Chairman, Mr Secretary General of the ICO, the foreign ministers of the Islamic countries and respected accompanying delegations. God's peace and blessings be on you.

Allow me, on behalf of the struggling Afghan people, to express my most grateful thanks and my esteem for your agreement to grant the seat reserved to Afghanistan to the representative of the provisional Islamic government of the Afghan Mujahidin, which was formed on the basis of a broad consensus and was elected by the Shura Majlis, comprised of representatives of the various groups of the Afghan people including scholars, shaykhs, experts, and leaders of the jihad.

There is no doubt that this just and courageous step by the ICO member countries is among the fateful issues of our Islamic nation. This will shows that these countries are still defending very seriously and devotedly the Islamic jihad movement in the various regions of the world to face up to colonization and hireling governments imposed on peoples.

The ICO proved by the historic initiative it took that it is always capable of playing an efficient and effective role in settling issues related to the Islamic countries. No one can deny the truth of this marvelous unanimity in supporting the just stand of our Muslim people, which is based on the right to self-determination without any external pressure and on the expulsion of the regime imposed on our people. This unanimity reflects our nation's strong will in dealing with its problems and the crises surrounding it.

We expected the Islamic states to take such honorable stands. This is the right path for these states to follow regarding Muslim issues in particular and international issues in general—about which they will have to express their opinions. These opinions are based on the principle of right and justice and stem from their Islamic responsibilities, which rely on the realization of the nation's interests.

Honorable Chairman and Brothers: Islam demands that we defend right with all our strength, fight bad with every means, and protect the oppressed against injustice and tyranny. The holy Koran says: "Why do you not fight for the cause of God and the helpless men, and women, and children who are saying 'God bring us forth from this city whose people are evildoers, and appoint to us a protector from thee, and appoint to us from thee a helper.'"

The prophet, may God's blessing be on him, said: "He who supports injustice to strengthen it and who is aware of it is himself an oppressor and has deviated from Islam."

As for the countries that stood beside the truth and supported the proposal according to which the seat reserved for Afghanistan was granted to the Islamic government of the mujahidin, which was chosen by our people, we thank them profoundly from the depths of our hearts for their noble stands. As for the countries whose delegations took a negative stand on this proposal for political reasons, and because of their own view concerning our cause, we do excuse them without any grievance because of their stand. We ask almighty God to make our hearts pure and free of any rancor toward our brothers, to remove any misunderstanding and marginal disagreements between us, and to make us successful in starting a new page of brotherly relations based on total understanding.

The governments that recognized our provisional Islamic government—against Moscow's will and despite U.S. nonrecognition of it—expressed their support for the proposal based on giving the seat reserved to Afghanistan at the ICO to our government. They have shown with their courageous step that they enjoy a free will not subject to any foreign pressure, that their decisions stem from their independent will, and that they are inspired by their conscience and belief in the justice of our cause.

As for the countries that defend the hireling regime in Kabul despite the will of the Muslim people, instead of helping to end the war—whose victims were mostly innocent civilians—and instead of trying hard to establish just peace and admit the right of our Muslim Afghan people to self-determination and to choose the government it deems appropriate, instead of all this, these countries took negative stands that prompted the hireling regime in Afghanistan to continue war and shed the blood of innocents. We consider the stands of these countries unfriendly, and we do not find any excuse for them. I hope they will reconsider their current stands and respond to our call to open new pages of brotherhood and cooperation to put an end to injustice and aggression.

Dear Chairman: We want a speedy end to the war and the immediate return of peace and security to all regions of our country. We hate those who make the war flare up and reject those who want to gain power through force, bloodshed, and the destruction of the country and impose themselves on the people against its will. We wish for our people the opportunity to choose with all its will the regime it desires in light of its Islamic faith and according to its special social circumstances without any foreign pressure or interference in an atmosphere remote from the battles. We want to set up a government based on the will of the people to achieve its interests.

Dear Chairman: I would like to announce from this rostrum that the mujahidin government will, when the war is ended and the crisis in Afghanistan is under control, God willing, adopt a policy based on general amnesty for those who have stood by the side of the foreign hostile forces and fought our people, whether they did it deliberately or not, willingly or unwillingly. This general amnesty is not a political step to attract the other side to join the mujahidin ranks but stems from our attachment to the teachings of Islam and our adherence to the line of our revered prophet, may God's blessings be upon him.

We know that Islam urges us not to accept humilitation and disgrace when we are defeated and not to be possessed by conceit and haughtiness to take revenge on the enemy when we win. Islam also orders us to be merciful to those people just as the prophet did when he conquered Makkah and issued his general amnesty order. As he said to the prisoners: "Go as you are free now." He said to his valiant soldiers: "Today is the day of mercy."

Following the example of our prophet, the teacher of humanity, we will declare the day of conquest a day of mercy and in accordance with the general amnesty we will embrace those who will have laid down their arms and who have renounced their enmity to Islam and to our Muslim people, and we will guarantee their safety, God willing.

We will establish cordial and good relations with all the states of the world on the basis of equality and mutual respect provided these states do not interfere in our internal affairs or try to impose their doctrine, their system, or their agents on our people, and provided they respect the safety of our territory and our sovereignty over our territory.

If Moscow abandons protection of the Najibullah regime and refrains from sending weapons and military arsenals to his hireling government, and if it does not cross our borders, respects our independence and sovereignty, and shows readiness to pay just reparations for the losses that result from its aggression against our country, we have no objection to establishing relations of good neighborliness with the Soviet Union.

From this place I would like to assure all the states of the world again that the Islamic Government of the mujahidin will be a free and independent state that follows a positive, effective, and nonaligned policy and that will judge international issues with justice and complete freedom.

As the seat belonging to one of the members of this organization, which remained vacant throughout the past years, is given to its legitimate representative at the same time that Brother Hamid al-Ghabid is named secretary general of this organization, and when my Brother His Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal is chairing this conference, I take this happy opportunity to thank them for the efforts they have made to make this matter a success and congratulate them for this brilliant sucess, which will forever occupy a dear place in the memory of our people.

It gives me pleasure to repeat my thanks and appreciation for the states that stood alongside our people in the resistance against the aggressors and helped them out of their plight in the practical, political, and information fields.

I say this and beg God's mercy for myself and for you. May the peace and blessing of God be upon you. Thank you.

Conference Condemns Rushdie Book

LD1603165389 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] The ICO has issued an extraordinary statement condemning the insulting book "The Satanic Verses", and declaring that the author of the book, Salman Rushdie, is an apostate.

According to the Iranian Foreign Ministry public relations department, a request for support for the imam's religious ruling concerning Salman Rushdie was made by Iran's representative at the ICO foreign minister's session in Riyadh. Following this request, this session issued a statement reflecting the common stands of the Islamic countries on insults directed at Islam, and calling on its members to ban the insulting book "The Satanic Verses", and to ban the entry of its author to Islamic countries. The statement also asks publishing companies to remove the book from the market immediately.

The extraordinary statement also states: The conference also calls on all members of the international community to prevent the sale and distribution of this book and to introduce legislation to protect the religious beliefs of others. This statement requests publishing companies to refrain from publishing any book which insults religious rites and values. The statement declares: All Islamic countries will make efforts—individually and jointly, and in an active and coordinated manner—to guarantee respect for Islam and its lofty values and to safeguard Islamic sanctities throughout the world. This statement stresses: On the basis of the right of free speech and belief, insulting divine religions cannot be justified on moral and religious grounds, and this kind of behaviour is the object of contempt and condemnation by all the world.

Conference Hails 'Uprising'

LD1603183289 Kuwait Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] In Riyadh, the 18th conference of the Islamic states foreign ministers announced recognition of the independent Palestinian state and demanded that the occupied Palestinian territories be placed under the supervision of the UN in readiness for a final Israel withdrawal from them.

The conference, among resolutions and recommendations it released today at the end of meetings held in Riyadh for 4 days, extended a salute of pride and esteem to the Palestinian people and their gallant uprising. It affirmed the unchanging attitude of the Islamic states in their support of the Palestinian people in their continuous jihad and blessed uprising until the complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from all the Palestinian territories, including holy Jerusalem, and until the Palestinian people are able to exercise their inalienable national rights.

The conference called on the United States to promote dialogue with the PLO. It affirmed that the appropriate peaceful solution to the Middle East issue will be reached through an international conference in which all the sides concerned, including the PLO, can take part and the five permanent members of the Security Council will attend.

The conference expressed appreciation for the European group and its positive role toward the Palestinian issue. It called upon it to recognize the Palestinian state. It called on the Islamic states and the Jerusalem committee to draw up a plan to confront Israel's announcement to extend the province of the municipality of Jerusalem to the holy Al-Aqsa mosque.

The 18th conference of the Islamic foreign ministers decided to entrust the ICO secretary general with continuing contacts with the international organizations and bodies in order to provide international protection for the Palestinian people and in order to implement the fourth Geneva agreement of 1949, which involves the treatment of civilians in time of war and under occupation.

The conference called for the formation of committees to champion the Palestine cause in all the countries of the Islamic world and issue a stamp for the uprising—the revenue from which would be channelled to the PLO uprising stamp fund.

It also called for the establishment of an ICO office in Europe with headquarters in Paris to exploit the positive transformation in the attitudes of the European community toward Islamic issues—particularly the issue of Palestine. The conference praised the steadfastness of the Arab citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights and their opposition to repressive Israeli measures. It affirmed that Israel's decision to impose its laws on the Syrian Golan Heights and change its legal character constitutes a flagrant violation of the UN Charter and resolutions.

The conference considered strategic U.S.-Israeli cooperation agreements, the continued supply of U.S. weapons to Israel, and economic aid, an encouragement to Israel to continue its hostile and expansionist policy in Arab areas in order to destabilize the area.

The conference appealed to member states to provide support for the Jerusalem committee to enable it to confront the colonization settlements in Palestine and the occupied Arab areas. It affirmed that the continuation of Jewish immigration to occupied Palestine and the Golan a major contribution to the policy of Zionist settlements.

The conference affirmed support for the efforts of the six-man Arab good offices committee, which is headed by Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir, the deputy prime minister and foreign minister; and it called on all the Lebanese sides concerned to cooperate with the committee and respond to its efforts.

The conference expressed satisfaction with the cease-fire in the Iraq-Iran war and renewed its support for Security Council Resolution No 598. It called for implementation of all its provisions and for efforts to find a comprehensive and just settlement that balances Iraq's and Iran's interests.

The conference of the Islamic foreign ministers announced recognition of the provisional government which was formed by the Afhgani fighters. It gave it the vacant Afghan seat at the ICO.

Chairman Al-Faysal Speaks

LD1603223189 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1915 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Riyadh, 16 Mar (SPA)—His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal made the following speech at the ICO foreign ministers conference:

After this touching speech by my Brother Engineer Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, I would like to point out that if this conference has achieved any of the aims hoped for by the Islamic nation, there is no doubt that the primary achievement is the acquisition by representatives of the Afghan mujahidin and representatives of the provisional Afghan Islamic government of Afghanistan's seat in this organization. This achievement has not come about from a vacuum but as a result of long years of struggle by the Afghan people—a struggle that has resulted in the withdrawal of Soviet forces and the crowning of the heroic Afghan struggle with the election of the shura and the formation of the provisional government.

On this occasion we appeal to our brothers in Afghanistan to unify and gather together for the sake of the unity and the good of the fraternal Muslim Afghan people. All efforts should be directed toward building the new, free, and independent Afghanistan. In this connection we cannot but express our appreciation for the positive stand expressed by Brother Hikmatyar toward the Soviet Union and his extending the hand of peace to it—an attitude that no doubt springs from the Islamic spirit, which urges forebearance and incites peace. God almighty says in his book: If the enemy is inclined toward peace, do thou incline toward peace. [Koranic verse]

We also appreciate the Soviet Union's fullfilment of its commitments by withdrawing from Afghanistan, and we appeal to the Soviet Union to accept the hand of peace of the Afghan mujahidin so the two neighbors may shake hands and together turn a new page in the history of their relations for the sake of their two peoples and the realization of world peace.

We, in the name of all the Islamic states which believe in the tolerent principles of Islam, extend a genuine invitation to all the Afghan factions to stand as one; to build rather than destroy the state of Afghanistan; and to spread the stability, prosperity, and wellbeing of the Afghan people, who suffered the terrors of the war for the sake of realizing victory. They deserve to pick the flower of their victory and the fruits of their struggle and jihad.

Thank you.

Conference Ends, Issues Communique

LD1603201889 Riyadh Television Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] The ICO foreign ministers conference ended at 2000 hours this evening under the chairmanship of His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, foreign minister and chairman of the conference.

The conference issued a final communique which says:

The 18th ICO foreign ministers conference was held in Riyadh, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, from 13-16 March 1989 AD under the kind patronage of King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques with the participation of the members states.

King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques, opened the conference and in his opening speech welcomed the participating delegations. He also expressed the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's pride in hosting this gathering, and his hopes that its work will be crowned with success. The custodian of the two holy mosques expressed hope that the conference will instill Islamic solidarity and brotherhood in the various aspects of joint Islamic work and institutions.

The custodian of the two holy mosques pointed out in his speech that Islamic solidarity is true solidarity because it stems from the holy book of God and from the teachings of his prophet, may God's prayers and peace be upon him, as these are the solid foundations upon which Muslims in the eastern and western corners of the earth base their spiritual and temporal affairs. These also constitute the basic pillar for Islamic solidarity and brotherhood in joint Islamic work in the context of the ICO and its constituent bodies. The ICO is the organization which holds the Islamic peoples and states together and embodies their vigilant presence in confronting the various challenges in the various aspects of life with solutions derived from our holy Islamic shari'ah.

The conference has decided to adopt the speech by the custodian of the two mosques as an official conference document.

Palestinian Affairs

USSR Reportedly To Upgrade PLO Mission

JN1603181689 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 15 Mar 89 pp 1, 21

[Text] Moscow—AL-ITTIHAD—USSR Foreign Ministry Spokesman Gennadiy Gerasimov yesterday said that Moscow had decided to upgrade the PLO diplomatic representation in the Soviet Union to the level of an embassy. He denied that the Soviet leadership had sent a message to Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat which was conveyed by the Soviet ambassador to Tunisia.

Responding to a question by AL-ITTIHAD, Gerasimov said he does not know whether his country has proposed a dialogue between the PLO and Israel. However, he said that what is important is the meeting itself, not its venue. He said: The venue could be Moscow, Cairo, or any other place.

PLO Ambassador Nabil 'Amr said Moscow pays great attention to the preparatory stage that must precede the convocation of an international conference. He emphasized that this Soviet proposal is not an alternative to an international conference.

Al-Najjab Discusses Soviet Role, U.S. Talks

JN1103101189 Kuwait AL-ANBA' in Arabic 9 Mar 89 p 29

[Interview with Sulayman al-Najjab, PLO Executive Committee member, by Sawsan Abu Husayn in Amman—date not given]

[Text] [Abu Husayn] What is your assessment of Shevardnadze's tour of the Arab region?

[Al-Najjab] Comrade Shevardnadze's regional tour is a sign of the activity of Soviet diplomacy and its concern for the Middle East issue, particularly the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Soviet minister affirmed to us his country's appreciation and support for the brave intifadah [uprising] and the importance of benefiting from the developments produced by this intifadah. The Soviet minister also affirmed to Yasir 'Arafat the importance of coordination and unified action among the five Arab parties participating in the international conference. He explained that the way to benefit from the Security Council with regard to preparing for the convening of an international conference and opening a dialogue on the Middle East issue within the Security Council.

It was natural for Shevardnadze to meet with the Palestinian party because it represents a regional state. The meeting is a Soviet reiteration that the PLO is a major element in any settlement—an element that cannot be ignored. This is a Soviet message addressed in the first place to the Israeli rulers and the new U.S. Administration as well as to all parties that are trying to exclude the PLO.

Hence, we can place Shevardnadze's regional tour under a broad headline: namely, the work to prepare for the convening of an international conference. The chances of success for this conference are greater now than before. The most important factor is the somewhat international unanimity that the only way to resolve the regional conflict is the settlement and guarantee of the Palestinian people's rights within an effective international conference. This conference must have characteristics that are known to all and that the USSR is now moving to directly support in order to entrench the positive situations achieved by the Palestine question on the international level and to shake the Israeli rejection of the idea of the international conference and the hesitant U.S. stand.

Therefore, the PLO proposed the formation of an Arab preparatory committee for the international conference whose task is to hold meetings among the five Arab participants. Some Arab parties and the USSR supported the idea. Shevardnadze, who discussed the issue with Syria, informed us that Syria agreed to the proposal. This makes the forming of the Arab preparatory committee an important and urgent matter. Hence, we reiterate the great importance of a unified Arab move and the work of all Arab countries in accordance with the resolutions adopted by the Arab summit in Algeria. We need more effective Arab action. We also believe that the seven-member Arab committee that comprises the foreign ministers of seven Arab countries plays an important and basic role in its moves toward the capitals of Security Council permanent members, the European capitals, and the nonaligned states. All this is urgent and necessary to escalate the Arab role in achieving peace in the region.

[Abu Husayn] Yasir 'Arafat announced that the American-Palestinian dialogue is open and contacts are continuous. Has the Palestinian party asked the United States to recognize the PLO representation of the Palestinian people and the Palestinian people's right to self-determination?

[Al-Najjab] In our dialogue with the United States, we constantly asked it to develop its stand and recognize the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and that it is a basic party in an effective international conference. We also asked the United States to develop its stand toward accepting the concept of the international conference as is unanimously agreed on by the world and not as an umbrella for an individual solution. We also asked the United States to lift its political protection off the crimes committed by Israel's rulers and to play an active role in protecting the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. We presented all these Palestinian demands via the messages of U.S.-Palestinian dialogue. However, the U.S. stand on the Palestinian people's rights is still as it was. It continues with its policy of great delay. We worry about U.S. procrastination and its wagering policies to absorb world interest and bypass the great achievements of the intifadah with the excuse that it still needs more time to organize its papers on the Middle East.

[Abu Husayn] Is it expected that the Palestinian-U.S. dialogue, whether unofficial or official but not direct, will yield results in the foreseeable future?

[Al-Najjab] The Palestinian leadership appreciates the great importance of the developments taking place on the Israeli internal front. We also realize our role in developing what is positive in the contacts taking place on various levels and exploiting any opportunity to address Israeli public opinion to affirm our serious and responsible stand. As for the official indirect Palestinian-U.S. dialogue, we could consider the meeting between Shevardnadze and Moshe Arens, with great reservation, as an indirect Palestinian-Israeli dialogue. The Soviet minister conveyed to us the Israeli rulers' point of view as expressed by Arens. He also conveyed to the Israeli side what the Palestinian side proposed. However, what concerns us now is that Israel's rulers should recognize, through various channels, that the PLO's declared stand is a united and serious stand. We will continue our activity to reach a political settlement through the international conference. We cannot achieve that through the initiative prepared by Shamir, which in reality, is a new Camp David.

Israel is now attempting to impose a kind of Arab-Israeli dialogue. This was expressed in its government's program and confirmed by Shamir and Arens. They want direct Arab negotiations under U.S. and Soviet auspices as an alternative to the international conference and to avoid dialogue with the PLO, substituting us with representatives of the Arab countries neighboring Israel and Palestinians from the inside. Israel also wants to distance the European role and the role of the Security Council's permanent members. This is rejected. A point against Israel is not only that it shies away from peace, but also that it continues its expansionist and aggressive policies and the policy of denying the Palestinian people's rights. Not only are Israel's rulers not satisfied with their negative stand toward peace, but they also actively escalate violence and oppression against the Palestinian people.

[Abu Husayn] What about the confederation with Jordan, which has recently cropped up in the arena?

[Al-Najjab] Bringing up the subject of a confederacy now is an Israeli proposal and a persistence on the part of its rulers to deny the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. We say here that the Palestine National Council's resolution on the confederacy is crystal clear. It is a contractual agreement between two independent states, which are Jordan and Palestine. Such an agreement will be signed after the establishment and independence of the Palestinian state. This will be based on a free decision between the two nations. There is no room for tampering with or disregarding the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

[Abu Husayn] How do you view the role of the new Arab groupings in supporting the Palestinian people's struggle in the coming stage?

[Al-Najjab] Firstly, we appreciate and respect the will of any Arab country to establish and shape its economic relations with the fraternal Arab countries. We also bless any Arab action that serves to rally Arab strengths to achieve their economic and cultural development which, in turn, will be a true support for our people's struggle. We have also discussed with the Palestinian leadership the issue of joining the three Arab groupings. We will ask to join as an observer state to affirm that the Palestine question is the central cause of all the Arabs, to consider these groupings as a way to support the struggle of the Arab peoples, to deter Israeli aggression, and to support our people's struggle inside and outside to enable them to establish their independent state.

[Abu Husayn] How do you view the efforts by the six-member Arab committee on Lebanon?

[Al-Najjab] We support the efforts exerted by this committee and thank fraternal Kuwait for assuming its important role in that. We bless all the measures that could realize the ambitions of the Lebanese people to live in peace, away from the atmosphere of war.

PLO Aide Views Strategy for Talks With U.S.

PM1603095089 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 15 Mar 89 pp 1-2

[Zaki Musa report: "Palestinian Official Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: In the Tunis Dialogue We Will Call for U.S. Recognition of PLO as Sole Representative"]

[Excerpt] London—A high-ranking Palestinian official has announced that the second round of U.S.-Palestinian dialogue will be held in the period from 15 to 23 March in Tunis. He told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the session will be preceded by a PLO Executive Committee meeting or by a limited leadership meeting to draw up a plan of action to include a number of essential points to be raised by the Palestinian delegation to the dialogue.

He said that agreement between the U.S. and Palestinian sides to hold the meeting came after the PLO officially asked the United States either to set a date or to stop contacts immediately.

The official added that the meetings between a number of ministers in the Austrian capital, on the sidelines of the conference on European peace and security, produced a date for the resumption of the dialogue, particularly after U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's meetings with the Soviet, Italian, and British ministers and with a European ministerial delegation composed of the French, Greek, and Spanish foreign ministers.

Italian Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti confirmed this to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT when he said that Baker told him that he was happy about the U.S. dialogue with the PLO and that he intended to resume it at the earliest opportunity.

The Palestinian official said that the PLO delegation, which will be headed by PLO Executive Committee Member Yasir 'Abd Rabbuh and will include PLO Executive Committee Member Dr 'Abdallah Hurani, PLO Representative in Tunis Hakam Bal'awi, and Political Department Director 'Abdallah Abu Hijlah, will ask the U.S. representative at the dialogue and Ambassador to Tunisia Robert Pelletreau to urge Washington to step up efforts to convene an international conference under UN supervision with the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council.

The Palestinian delegation will stress to the U.S. delegation the need for U.S. recognition of the PLO as the Palestinian people's sole legitimate representative, call for a higher level of dialogue, and urge the United States to exert tangible pressure for an end to the Israeli repressive practices against innocent people in the occupied territory either through exposure of these practices or through contacts with Israeli leaders. [passage omitted]

Al-Hasan Defines Fatah Stand on Jerusalem Visit

JN1603181089 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1715 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Fatah Central Committee Member Hani al-Hasan today explained Fatah's stand on a possible visit by a Palestinian official to Jerusalem. He said: What all the Fatah leaders, including Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], think about is how to escalate the popular intifadah [uprising] in the occupied territories. They also think about how to defeat Shamir's policy, which is hostile to peace, opposes the principle of a complete Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied territories, including Jerusalem, and is against the principle of holding an international peace conference that will bring about a just and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian cause. He added that any work to achieve this objective is based on the resolutions of the Palestine National Council, the intifadah session. He said that these resolutions are crystal clear, and they are the ones that govern the stands of all parties, and are the authority for the drawing up of policies and defining binding stands.

Commentary Stresses 'Uprising' Will Continue

JN1603075089 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1858 GMT 15 Mar 89

["Talk of the Intifadah": "The Intifadah Lies in Wait for the Enemy and Chases It at All Stations"]

[Text] To the masses of our heroic people throughout the glowing homeland, to our gigantic generations and revolutionary youths, to the heroes of our strike groups, the vanguards of our popular army, to the staunch men in youth and popular committees, and to our brothers and sisters in trade unions and national institutions and societies: The intifadah [uprising] will continue until the state is established and independence is completed. All Zionist or American wagers on ending the intifadah in any form are stupid, unsuccessful, and losing wagers on all levels. The intifadah is not merely a kind of protest; nor is it a kind of demand for beautifing the face of the occupation or easing its oppressive measures and practices. It is a comprehensive struggle aimed at removing the occupation, defeating it completely, undermining all its foundations, and destroying all its bases in order to liberate the Palestinian land and masses and establish the Palestinian state.

In its full sense, the intifadah is a new comprehensive life for our Palestinian people and a reformation of our Palestinian homeland, a homeland clear of the filth of the abhorrent occupation and all its aftermath regardless of the blood and sacrifice and no matter what this requires in terms of escalating the struggle until it reaches its peak. Regardless of the cost, we, the Palestinian people have no time but the time of the intifadah, no choice but that of the intifadah, and no life to accept, enrich, and develop except that of the intifadah.

We know that the Zionist enemy, its extremists and opponents alike, are living on their old illusions, based as they are on the old myths of strength and cleverness. We say to these rancorous extremists and opponents that the time of the illusions of strength has gone forever. You are facing the Palestinian people, the ingenious Palestinian mentality, the daring Palestinian heart, and the miracle of Palestinian action, which converted the stone into a volcano and turned the struggle into a non-stop fire, whose sacred glare is unextinguishable. O Zionists, read lessons and facts carefully. The heroic actions of the fedayeen in Beirut and Lebanon during the invasion dashed forever and stepped over the illusions of Zionist belligerence. The heroism of the children of Palestine and the great Palestinian generations during the sacred time of the intifadah over the past 15 months provide the greatest evidence for those among the Zionists who want to know that they have no hope but to acknowledge the Palestinian right, yield to the Palestinian fact, and completely recognize Palestinian independence and the state.

The already known problem is that this Zionist entity is totally dependent on U.S. support, viewpoints, and maneuvers. As we all know, the Americans are procrastinating and using the time factor in the belief that procrastination will stop and end the intifadah. This U.S. conception is losing, and it is hostile. Every day, the intifadah becomes firmer, deeper, and interacts more with its Palestinian people, both in the homeland and in exile and with its Arab world and unity. Although the pressure on the Arab world by the United States is very intense and makes some shake with fear, Arab unity is interacting with the intifadah, and this will have much more impact than all expectations. The intifadah is also interacting with its international environment. Israel's image has collapsed and become disgraceful, and many international forces are now sure that this trivial and weak Zionist entity is not fit to fulfill the ambitions attached to it. Indeed, the Jews in the United States, Europe, and throughout the world are now confident that Israel will never be their safe place, but a source of constant tragedy. Above all, the intifadah, in its comprehensiveness and constant interaction, is ready for all possibilities, the most prominant of which is a full and wide-scale clash in which all the capabilities of the people and the revolution are used—the stone when it is appropriate, and all weapons, when this is given priority.

The important thing is that the intifadah is our new life, our only choice, the splendid manifestation of our strength, and the continuation of our struggle with this rancorous and accursed Zionist occupation.

Therefore, O our heroic struggling people, our great gigantic generations, our bold valiant masses, and heroes of our blessed intifadah, proceed with all hope, confidence, and innovation along the path of our inevitable victory and full independence. It is a revolution until victory.

Libya

Syria's Al-Asad Meets Al-Qadhdhafi in Banghazi

JN1503161289 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1515 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Banghazi—President Hafiz al-Asad and his delegation arrived in Banghazi in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah at 1430, Damascus time, today. The delegation includes Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam; Comrade Sa'id Hammadi, member of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party Regional Command; and Daniel Ni'mah and Safwan Qudsi, members of the Central Command of the Progressive National Front.

The president was accorded a warm official and popular welcome at Baninah Airport. Heading those welcoming the president was Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the 1 September Revolution in Libya. Also receiving his excellency were Major 'Abd al-Salam Jallud, member of the Revolution Command; popular and revolutionary committees representatives; senior officials in Banghazi; Libyan Armed Forces representatives; and crowds of Libyan Arab people.

After the Syrian and Libyan national anthems were played, the president inspected the guard of honor and then headed with Col al-Qadhdhafi to the VIP lounge at the airport amid a popular demonstration. The demonstrators chanted for President Hafiz al-Asad, the hero of Syria, leader of steafastness and confrontation, and carrier of the banner of Arab unity.

The president answered two questions posed by JANA at the VIP lounge at the airport. Responding to the first question, the president said: You know that it has become a tradition for us to meet with our Arab people in the Jamahiriyah and with Brother Col Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi and his brother members of the leadership. An intimate personal friendship binds the two of us. Within pan-Arab ties, the two countries are bound by many factors which bring us closer together. It has become customary for us to meet from time to time to review the past, discuss the present and future, hold bilateral talks, and examine our united vision. We always emerged from our previous meetings with an agreement on all matters raised. I am confident that this time too, as in the past, we will emerge with unified opinions. We scarcely disagreed in the past. I am happy to be on the land of the Jamahiriyah and to see our great Libyan Arab people. I want to convey through you to the great Libyan people my greetings and the greetings of the Syrian Arab people with their old men, young men, and women.

Responding to the second question concerning Arab unity in the current pressing circumstances as seen in the establishment of regional blocs in many continents, the president said: I believe we are in an anomalous situation so long as we are not united. And I say we are in an abnormal situation. Therefore, we must normalize matters in order to achieve unity; that is, we will not be in a normal situation so long as unity is not achieved. In the present, or in the past or future, without unity there will be no normal life for us and no future for us. It is noteworthy, indeed, that there are now pressing factors, as you indicated in your question. The current age is one of blocs. However, unity is an urgent and pressing factor, whether the world forms blocs in other continents or other regions, or not, We are one nation bound by all factors that form a nation. We must respond to these factors, and establidh our unity.

Further on Airport Arrival

LD1603140889 Tripoli Domestic Service in Arabic 1330 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Excerpt] President Hafiz al-Asad, president of the sisterly Republic of Syria, arrived at Bninah International Airport in Banghazi at 1315 p.m. on a visit to the Great Jamahiriyah.

A large popular and official welcome ceremony was organized in honor of President Hafiz al-Asad, where the brother leader of the revolution led his welcomers. Staff Major 'Abd al-Salam Ahmad Jallud took part in the ceremony. Also were present brothers secretary and members of the General People's Congress, secretary and members of the General People's committee, and the secretaries of the people's congress and people's committees in Banghazi municipality. Also present were a number of the officers of the Libyan Arab Armed Forces, members of the diplomatic corps accredited in the great Jamahiriyah, the masses of the peoples congresses and the educational institutions, and the youth of the centers of the education of the masses in the municipality. [passage omitted]

Talks Begin in Banghazi

JN1603191589 Damascus Television Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad and Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi began talks at the president's residence in Banghazi at 1845 this evening, Damascus time. The meeting was attended by Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam and Major 'Abd al-Salam Jallud. The talks dealt with the general situation in the region and the situation in the Arab arena in light of Arab, regional, and international developments. The talks also discussed methods to rally Arab resources to defend the Arab nation's interests.

Sudan

Al-Mahdi To Form New Government 18 Mar

JN1603082289 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0712 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Doha, 16 Mar (WAKH)—The day after tomorrow, Saturday [18 March], has been fixed as a final date to form a new Sudanese government led by Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi.

In a report from Khartoum, Qatari newspaper AL-RAYAH today cited Nasr al-Din al-Hadi al-Mahdi, deputy leader of the Ummah Party, as saying that this government will have 23 portfolios distributed among the Ummah Party, the Democratic Unionist Party, the National Party, and the southern parties.

The paper also cited Dr 'Umar Nur al-Dayim, a prominent member of the Ummah Party, as saying that a cease-fire between the rebel forces led by John Garang and the Sudanese Armed Forces will be declared within 2 weeks. He said consultations with the Garang movement to achieve peace in southern Sudan are proceeding in a positive manner, particularly as Ethiopia affirmed its commitment to the policy of good neighborliness with Sudan and to improving relations between the two countries.

Portfolio Distribution Detailed

NC1603200389 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1945 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Khartoum, 16 Mar (MENA)—It has been decided that the new cabinet of the expanded Sudanese Government will be announced on the day after tomorrow, Saturday, [18 March] at a news conference to be held by Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi. The new cabinet will include party and trade union members from inside and outside the Sudanese Constituent Assembly, except for the Islamic Front, which has moved into the opposition ranks.

Agreement has been reached on the final makeup of the Sudanese Government. It will include 23 portfolios, with 6 reserved for the Al-Ummah Party, 5 for the Democratic Unionist Party, 4 for the southern parties, 2 for the trade unions, 2 for forces outside the Constituent Assembly, 1 for the left-wing faction of the Constituent Assembly, and 1 for the Sudanese National Party which is represented in the Constituent Assembly.

Agreement also has been reached to give the defense portfolio to an individual with a strong personality on whom the parties will agree. There is, however, disagreement over the interior minister portfolio, which Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi and Democratic Unionist Party leader Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani are expected to settle. [passage omitted]

Al-Mahdi To Approve Peace Accord With 'Rebels'

NC1603134989 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Sudanese Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi today announced his approval of the peace agreement reached by the Democratic Unionist Party and southern rebels last November.

During a meeting today with the leaders of certain political parties, Al-Mahdi said he had actually notified the southern rebels of his approval.

In the meantime, informed Sudanese sources stated that Al-Mahdi will contact rebels to study means of implementing the agreement, after forming the new government which will be announced after tomorrow, Saturday [18 March].

Bahrain

Thai Crown Prince Arrives in Manama 13 Mar

JN1303163489 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1456 GMT 13 Mar 89

[Text] Manama, 13 Mar (WAKH)—Thai Crown Prince Maha Wachiralongkon arrived in Manama this evening on a 3-day visit to Bahrain.

Heading the delegation receiving him was His Highness Shaykh Hamad ibn 'Isa al-Khalifah, heir apparent and general commander of the Bahraini Defense Force, Thailand's ambassador in Bahrain, and a number of civil and military officials.

The crown prince of Thailand is accompanied on his visit to Bahrain, which comes in answer to an invitation by his highness the heir apparent and general commander of the Bahraini Defense Forces, by a number of Thai Government officials and a delegation of journalists.

Meets Amir, Prime Minister

JN1303205689 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1920 GMT 13 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Manama, 13 Mar (WAKH)—Bahraini Amir His Highness Shaykh 'Isa ibn Salman al-Khalifah and Bahraini Prime Minister His Highness Shaykh Khalifah ibn Salman al-Khalifah this evening in Manama received Thai Crown Prince Maha Wachiralongkon, who is currently visiting Bahrain, and his delegation.

They discussed means of promoting bilateral relations and issues of mutual interest. [passage omitted]

Concludes Visit, Departs

JN1503113289 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1030 GMT 15 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Manama, 15 Mar (WAKH)—Thai Crown Prince Maha Wachiralongkon concluded an official 3-day visit to Bahrain today and left for his country. [passage omitted]

Kuwait

AL-QABAS Cites Official on Rushdie Book

JN1303103489

[Editorial report] Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic on 11 March 1989 carries on page 4 an unattributed 5,000-word opinion poll of several Kuwaiti intellectuals on Salman Rushdie's book "The Satanic Verses", and the appropriate response to it. Those polled include Hamad Yusuf al-Rumi, Kuwaiti Information Ministry under secretary, who says: "I believe that the appropriate response under the circumstances is to boycott this obscene and vulgar book, to ban the author's works, and to ban the distribution of the publications of the publishing house that published the book. This is because this book is too blasphemous, obscene, and harmful to our religion to be debated or discussed. How can the author be argued with when he does not follow any scientific, logical, historical, or dialectical approach?"

Al-Rumi adds: "I also propose that this issue be studied by various Gulf Cooperation Council information committees. This book will receive its due attention from all Arab and Islamic states, as it is so offensive toward Islam and its sanctities. The continuing controversy over the book has made it famous and has won the support and sympathy of the western world for it. This raises doubts about the West's intentions and rancor against Islam. It is very likely that this renegade writer is a cat's claw to distort the image of Islam in the West. I also believe that Arab and Islamic governments, organizations, and institutions should appeal to the western world through the available diplomatic channels about the need to pass laws that guarantee that Islamic sanctities and beliefs are not offended, as in the Arab and Islamic world where other religions and beliefs are respected."

Yemen Arab Republic

PRC Foreign Ministry Delegation Arrives 14 Mar

JN1403181589 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 14 Mar 89

[Text] A delegation of the People's Republic of China [PRC] Foreign Ministry led by Huang Tao Yao, director of the Consular Affairs Department at the PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs [title as heard], arrived in Sanaa this evening on a visit of several days.

In a statement to SABA', the PRC official said that he would hold talks with Yemeni Arab Repblic [YAR] Foreign Ministry officials on expanding an agreement on cooperation between the two countries as well as the growing relations between our country and the PRC. The PRC delegation was received by brother 'Abbas al-Wazir, minister plenipotentiary at the Foreign Ministry, the PRC charge d'affaires, and the chief of protocol at the Foreign Ministry.

Iraqi Oil Minister Al-Jalabi Pays Visit

JN1303161789 Baghdad INA in English 1420 GMT 13 Mar 89

[Text] Sanaa, Mar 13, INA—The YAR prime minister, 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Abd al-Ghani, met here today with Iraqi oil minister, 'Isam 'Abd al-Rahim, currently visiting Sanaa.

Mr. 'Abd al-Rahim told INA that his talks with the Yemeni premier focused on boosting bilateral oil industry cooperation and providing the YAR with technical expertise as well as reviewing world oil prices.

The Iraqi minister, earlier, discussed with his YAR counterpart, Ahmad al-Mahanni, means of increasing bilateral cooperations in the field of oil industries.

Oil Committee Meets 13 Mar

JN1403070589 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 13 Mar 89

[Text] The Joint Yemeni-Iraqi Permanent Committee for Oil and Gas Affairs today met at the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Wealth under brothers Ahmad 'Ali al-Muhanni, minister of petroleum and mineral wealth, and 'Isam 'Abd al-Rahim al-Jalabi, Iraqi oil minister.

The committee discussed the fields of cooperation that were agreed upon during the meeting in Baghdad in January. During this session, it concentrated on setting the practical and executive steps for what had been agreed upon.

Al-Jalabi Leaves Sanaa 15 Mar

JN1503184489 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 15 Mar 89

[Text] Iraqi Oil Minister 'Isam 'Abd al-Rahim al-Jalabi and accompanying delegation left Sanaa this morning after a 3-day visit to our country during which he held talks with the brother officials in the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources on bilateral cooperation in the field of petroleum products.

In a statement before he and his delegation departed, Al-Jalabi described his visit as beneficial and fruitful in entrenching cooperation between the two countries in the field of petroleum products. He indicated that they continued discussions that had been started in Baghdad during the meetings of the joint committee. He said that they had agreed on a number of issues, the most important of which is coordination in information exchange and discussion, which would stabilize international oil prices. They also discussed cooperation within the Arab Cooperation Council. They agreed to to continue to exchange views, send Iraqi experts to the YAR, and to accept Yemeni students in Iraqi colleges.

The Iraqi oil minister expressed his hope that the cooperation between the two fraternal countries would yield good results in the interest of the Iraqi and Yemeni people.

He was seen off by Ahmad 'Ali al-Muhanni, minister of petroleum and mineral wealth, Brother 'Adil al-Qudsi, the ministry's undersecretary for the oil section, a number of ministry officials , Iraqi Ambassador in Sanaa 'Abd Husayn Ibrahim al-Rifa'i, and several embassy staff.

Council Member Receives Iraqi Official Message

JN1503174389 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 15 Mar 89

[Text] Brother Judge 'Abd al-Karim 'Abdallah al-'Arashi, head of the Consultative Council and member of the Standing Committee, received this morning Brother 'Abd Husayn Ibrahim al-Rifa'i, Iraqi ambassador in the city, who delivered a written message from his brother 'Izzat Ibrahim, head of the Higher Committee supervising the Iraqi National Council elections. They discussed parliamentary relations between the two countries.

UN Seeks To Schedule Talks With Iran in Apr

JN1703080489 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 17 Mar 89 pp 1, 17

[By Muhammad al-Majali from Riyadh]

[Text] Tariq 'Aziz, Iraqi deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has affirmed that the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC] states share a profound faith in Arab solidarity and seek to strengthen joint Arab action. He said the ACC states will also cooperate with the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab Maghreb Union.

In a statement to AL-DUSTUR, 'Aziz said: We in the ACC states are part of the Islamic world and always seek that the Islamic states occupy the prominent position they deserve in the international community.

Responding to a question on the Iraq-Iran negotiations, 'Aziz said that UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar is seeking to hold a new round of negotiations between Iraq and Iran next month.

He added that Iraq is ready to participate in these negotiations, but he referred to Iraq's call that negotiations be direct and real, and not mere arguments and propaganda campaigns leading nowhere.

On the future of negotiations in view of the head of the Iranian delegation's remarks at the Islamic foreign ministers conference, the Iraqi minister said that the meeting did not deal with the essential issues. Therefore, the true Iranian intentions were not revealed.

However, he indicated that the behavior of the Iranian delegation during the negotiations over the past 3 months differs in form and substance from the language used by the Iranian delegation during the meetings of the Islamic Conference Organization.

'Aziz said: We must not draw hasty conclusions based on the Iranian stand at the conference. He indicated that the Iranians have so far showed no desire to take the first step toward a comprehensive and durable peace in the region. He said that to move in this direction, Iran should present tangible evidence about its position now as peace must be based on mutual respect, noninterference in internal affairs, and guaranteed security and stability in the region.

Arab Health Council Asked To Re-Admit Egypt

JN1103185489 Baghdad INA in English 1750 GMT 11 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, Mar. 11, INA—Iraq called for [the] readmission of Egypt to [the] Arab Health Ministers Council.

That came in a telegram addressed today by Iraqi Acting Health Minister 'Abd al-Salam Muhammad Sa'id to Mr. Taleb Bencheikh, the Moroccan health minister, chairman of the current session of the council.

The telegram contained listing [as received] an item on this request on agenda of the Council's 14th session and the Executive Bureau's 59th session that will be held in Libya on 18 instant [18 March].

The technical secretariat of the Arab Health Ministers Council circulated Iraq's request in prelude to submit the call to the Executive Bureau's 59th session which prepares [the] agenda of the Council's 14th session.

Iraq's call comes out of its realization of the importance of Egypt's participation to perform its role in all Arab gatherings and organizations owing to the weight Egypt entertains at both Arab and international levels.

Cooperation Protocol Signed With Pakistan

JN1703102089 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0930 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 17 Mar (INA)—Iraq and Pakistan signed a protocol last night for economic, trade, and technical cooperation between the two countries. The protocol, signed for Iraq by Minister of Trade Muhammad Mahdi Salih and on for Pakistan by Faisal Hayat, minister of commerce, local government, rural development, and industries, provides for increasing trade exchanges and expanding economic cooperation between the two countries.

Ship Returns Across Shatt al-Basrah River

JN1303150589 Baghdad INA in English 1415 GMT 13 Mar 89

[Text] Basra, Southern Iraq, Mar 13, INA—An Iraqi ship today made a unique voyage across the Shatt al-Basrah river after having been trapped since the outbreak of the Iraq-Iran war in September 1980.

The ship "Zannubiya", having been trapped along with 57 other Iraqi, Arab and foreign vessels in the Iraqi Shatt al-'Arab river since Iran's aggression on Iraq in 1980, was partially repaired by Iraqi technicians to start operating.

Iraqi minister of transport and communications told INA that "Zannubiya", with a loading capacity of 3550 tonnes, would anchor at a port for further repairs from damages incurred by the Iranian shelling.

The minister said the Iraqi ship is the first one sailing at Shatt al-Basrah since the beginning of the Iranian aggression on Iraq.

He added that Iraqi technicians carried out some repairs to the ship "Zannubiya" which will be comprehensively repaired at one of the sea ports.

Navigation in Shatt al-'Arab was stopped immediately at the beginning of the Iranian aggression on Iraq on September 4, 1980 where 58 Iraqi, Arab and foreign ships were retained.

Iran refuses Iraqi demands of clearing the Shatt al-'Arab for navigation, under auspices of the United Nations, as a measure within the ceasefire.

Arens: 'No Crisis' in Relations With U.S.

TA1703070189 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0505 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Moshe Arens in New York by political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami in the studio 17 March—recorded]

[Text] [Arens] There is no crisis, nor is there a shadow of a crisis, and in my opinion there is no misunderstanding. My meetings with the secretary of state and the President were friendly. We held good talks in which there was a great deal of understanding. I believe they were beneficial in preparing for the prime minister's visit next month.

[Ben-'Ami] Nonetheless, Mr Arens, I understand that the feeling—as you must have heard on Capitol Hill and from Secretary of State Baker—is that the American stand means that there is no way around talks with the Palestinians and perhaps also with the PLO.

[Arens] There is no disagreement about talking to the Palestinians; this is our position as well. I presented it as such even before speaking to the secretary of state.

The fact that the United States is holding contacts with the PLO is well known to us. I must admit that I did not expect to change this position during my meetings here. We were aware of these facts before I came to Washington.

[Ben-'Ami] Let us clarify the issue of talks with the Palestinians. Both you in the United States and the prime minister here speak in favor of talking to the Palestinians or representatives of residents from Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. Can you conceive of Palestinians who would talk to you without getting the go-ahead from the PLO?

[Arens] I believe that the way to choose representatives of the residents of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip still needs to be debated. I believe we will have discussions on this issue in Israel. Only later will I be able to respond to your question.

[Ben-'Ami] Do you believe, in principle, that such a leadership can be found?

[Arens] I am almost certain it will be found. I know that there is a problem concerning the PLO threatening and terrorizing the residents or whoever expresses opinions not in line with its own. I believe, however, that it is important to overcome this threat, and I believe we will.

[Ben-'Ami] Mr Arens, reports from the United States about your meetings there with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee mentioned warnings or friendly advice from Israel's friends and supporters to the effect that we may lose the game if we do not act in the spirit the United States is pointing to.

[Arens] Here as well, the picture is not uniform. Many of those I met with expressed unqualified support. We were given advice everywhere, of course. Here and there, in Congress, there was an uneasy feeling. Some believe that Israel should present a more flexible position, that we are under attack and that it is important for us to take initiatives to counter these attacks. Some of the advice was good and should be taken note of.

[Ben-'Ami] Mr Arens, could you tell us what you will recommend that the prime minister bring with him for his 6 April meeting with President Bush?

[Arens] I would rather tell the prime minister before announcing this on the radio.

[Ben-'Ami] So we will have to wait. Thank you, Mr Foreign Minister.

[Arens] Thank you.

Levi Rejects Baker Statement

TA1603191089 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1705 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Deputy Prime Minister David Levi vehemently rejected James Baker's assertion that Israel should negotiate with the PLO. Levi made these statements to our correspondent Meron Tzur in Lod.

[Begin Levi recording] I heard Baker's statement, just like any other Israeli. We all need to stop for a moment to fully comprehend what is going on. What I mean to say is that the problem is that this is not just any dialogue. This is a dialogue with the United States. Our nation has decided not to commit suicide. What is there to discuss with the PLO? The weather? The Koran? The Torah? Recognizing the PLO as a national liberation movement is tantamount to setting up a Palestinian state.

I also spoke before the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations about the one clear message on which we should insist at this time: a message based on the wide national consensus prevalent in Israel. That message is one of firm opposition to a Palestinian state, which is viewed in Israel as dangerous for our future.

We must formulate a wide national strategy within Israel on this matter, and our dialogue with the U.S. Administration should follow this strategy. Israel will not allow the setting up of a Palestinian state because this would constitute a real danger for our future. We must unite on this. I would say that this is the really crucial issue for all of us. All the rest is merely nuances, and there is no need to engage in nitpicking. We must spell it out clearly: no to a Palestinian state. [end recording]

Shamir Drafting New 'Phased' Political Plan

*TA1703111189 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
17 Mar 89 p B3*

[Report on interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by Ilan Shehori—date and place not given]

[Excerpts] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir was pleased this week. He believes the results of the local elections enhanced support for the Likud on all levels of Israeli society throughout the country. The Likud has gained strength and closed ranks, while the Labor Party sustained a defeat that reduced to a minimum the chances that it might be joined by the religious parties in disbanding the unity government. Other than that, Shamir received positive reports from Foreign Minister Moshe Arens about his meetings with the top echelon of the U.S. Administration, with the exception of Secretary of State James Baker's statement that in the future Israel will have to talk to PLO representatives. With the help of his close associates Ministers Ehud Olmert and Dan Meridor, and the director of his office Yosi Ben-Aharon, Shamir has almost completed the formulation of his new political plan that he believes will bring about tranquillity in the region. Shamir will reveal this plan for the first time in his meeting with U.S. President George Bush during his visit to the United States in April. [passage omitted]

It was reported yesterday that the U.S. secretary of state informed Israel that there will be no choice other than beginning talks with the PLO. Shamir has not hastened to comment on the reports on this topic. He would rather wait to hear about it from Foreign Minister Moshe Arens at the beginning of next week. The prime minister says that, in any case, negotiations between Israel and PLO representatives are totally out of the question. He does not foresee serious differences of opinion with the U.S. Administration.

Shamir is not prepared to comment on U.S. media reports that the U.S. Administration is demanding a change in Israel's norms of behavior in the territories. "I read about it in the papers. I realize that what is happening in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza worries and bothers the United States. I can understand that because the United States is interested in peace and stability in this part of the world. I did not detect a call on Israel to mend its ways or change its norms of behavior. What is discernable is an unease about the current situation, and we share that feeling. It cannot be said that we are thrilled about what has been happening in Judaea and Samaria. But what exactly the United States thinks we and it can contribute on this matter will become clear after the foreign minister returns to Israel, and after my visit to the United States, during which I will have an opportunity to discuss all these matters in depth."

In anticipation of his trip to the United States Shamir is currently completing the formulation of his political plan. He will present this plan to U.S. President George Bush and his aides at the beginning of April. Shamir reveals that he is drafting an Israeli phased plan. The first phase of this plan will bring about calm in the region because it will meet some of the aspirations of the Arabs. "There is no doubt that I will present the Americans with a series of ideas which I consider, if not a solution to the entire Israeli-Arab conflict, at least part of such a solution or a way conducive to such a solution. This will be done in phases."

Commenting on the principles of his political plan, the prime minister says: "It is aimed at a full settlement of the conflict. I do not want to go into details because I will present them in full to U.S. leaders. But these phases are clearly able to meet the aspirations of the Arabs living with us to a great extent, without harming or jeopardizing Israel's security, and bearing in mind that this is just one phase and one part of the way. One thing must be clear: It would be a lie to accuse me and the Likud of sticking to the status quo. I do not want anything worse than the status quo, but I do not adhere to the status quo because it lacks the element of peace, and we want to attain peace."

According to the prime minister, his new political plan does not include a withdrawal from the territories. "There is no territorial element in any of my proposals. I do not think that any territorial component can help attain peace and settle this conflict. The dimensions of our territory must be taken into account. After all, it is ridiculous to talk about a large Israel. This is a minuscule and tiny country. I definitely believe that peace can be attained on the basis of the guidelines I will present to the U.S. Administration. I have no doubt that the entire U.S. Administration will rally around, through cooperation with the State of Israel, to attain peace in the region."

Shamir says his political plan for the territories and the contact with the Americans are in no way related to the settlement drive in the territories. He hints that before his departure for the United States the number of settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza may increase, in keeping with the government's basic guidelines.

"Settlement is totally unrelated to political initiative. The Americans also support the premise that Jews have a right to live anywhere in Eretz Yisra'el, just as many Arabs live in our midst—and this very fact proves that coexistence is possible. I do not understand why one can settle in the Galilee and cannot settle in Judaea and Samaria. The existence and establishment of settlements is totally unrelated to the peace process. I have said as much and will continue to emphasize this in the future to the Americans and the Arabs. I do not regard the settlements as any form of demonstration. I consider them a normal phenomenon, part of our everyday life," the prime minister says.

Shamir rules out the Labor Party's demand to coordinate positions and conduct a political discussion before his departure for the United States. He makes it clear that there will be no debate in the Inner Cabinet on this issue before his departure.

Commenting on Rabin's plan for solving the problem of the territories, the prime minister says that the matter will be discussed in a general political debate. "It will be part of the political discussions that will be conducted. After all, these discussions will not stop because of one trip on my part to the United States. There will yet be meetings and deliberations. I will not be the only person who will travel to the United States. I hope we are entering a period of deliberations that will continue and yield results," the prime minister emphasized. [passage omitted]

Baker Remarks on PLO 'Unmistakable Warning'

TA1703114089 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 17 Mar 89 p 6

[Editorial: "Waiting for Mr. Shamir"]

[Text] So resounding a rap on the knuckles was the last thing Foreign Minister Moshe Arens must have expected as a parting present from his friendly host James Baker, the U.S. Secretary of State.

Mr. Baker's flat refusal to even contemplate a break-off of the dialogue with the PLO, as urged on him by Mr. Arens, may have been disappointing but it was not very surprising. The Bush administration, while claiming to be in no hurry for a breakthrough to Middle East peace, is clearly anxious to keep playing the role of moderator in the conflict; and that now means keeping a channel of communications open to the PLO. Much more disconcerting must have been the indifference shown by Mr. Baker to evidence produced by Israel that Yasir 'Arafat's supposed renunciation of terrorism was a fake.

The true, and truly rude, surprise of Mr. Arens's talks with administration leaders came after his private meeting with Mr. Baker, however. Its point was that, if Israel could not find its way to starting meaningful, direct negotiations with non-PLO Palestinians in the territories, then there might be no choice for it but to negotiate directly with the PLO itself. That point was first made by Mr. Baker in the public testimony before a House subcommittee, on Tuesday, and it was reiterated by him in testimony before a Senate subcommittee the following day.

Nothing of course, could be farther from the mind of an Israeli government committed to having no truck with the PLO. The now controlling Likud interpretation of the ban is that the PLO is inherently, and unchangeably, a terrorist enemy pledged to the destruction of the Jewish state, and thus no conceivable peace partner ever.

That is the thesis which the U.S. Secretary of State has now publicly advised Premier Yitzhaq Shamir to junk. Mr. Baker did not pronounce the PLO an immediately fit, and desirable, partner to peace with Israel. He appeared willing to concede that it would be preferable for Israel to have local Palestinians as peace negotiators; although these, too, could obviously not undertake any such mission without a nod of approval from Tunis. But it was, so he clearly hinted, up to Israel to prove that its dearest wish is indeed to achieve a just and durable peace.

"It is important," said Mr. Baker, "that we do not categorically, absolutely, totally and completely rule out in any and all circumstances any dialogue that might lead to peace."

Behind those words there seemed to lurk a gentle but unmistakable warning. The U.S. is still a friend of Israel, and will not lean on it to make it reverse a settled policy. But this policy is counter-productive. It is leading Israel into a blind alley, and is resulting in Israel's acquiring the image, formerly reserved for the PLO, of the intransigent foe of peace in American public opinion. The U.S. does not expect Israel to surrender to the violent rioters in the territories. But if, as the U.S. is now trying to ensure through its contacts with the PLO, the level of violence is appreciably reduced, it would behoove Israel to correspondingly moderate its repressive measures.

Such "confidence-building measures" should pave the way to an Israel-Palestinian dialogue which, if successful, could boost the prospects of an expanded peace process with the Arab states. The dialogue need not be conducted directly with the PLO, and in agreeing to it Israel will not have to officially recognize the PLO. But for the dialogue to be initiated, in whatever form, and to lead to agreement, the PLO's concurrence would be essential. The necessity of a direct political encounter with the PLO cannot, however, completely be ruled out.

For all its careful diplomatic packaging, the new, indeed revolutionary U.S. initiative—it does not yet merit the label of policy—is bound to be deeply resented. In some quarters it will be denounced as rank betrayal of a loyal ally. Yet, at bottom, it is the inevitable, perhaps overdue, response of Israel's major patron to the systematic removal, by a succession of Israeli governments, of virtually every peace alternative save the one most heartily detested by most Israelis.

The initiative is deliberately vague on the ultimate goals as well as on details, and it is open to criticism on many counts. But the prime minister would be foolish to try to fend it off with his now standard twaddle about Camp David. America is waiting for Mr. Shamir to demonstrate, on *his* [italics as published] arrival in Washington soon, that the pursuit of peace is indeed Israel's highest mission.

Shamir Seeks Non-PLO Avenues, Meets Palestinians

TA1603211089 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir is searching for avenues of communication with Palestinian representatives who are not PLO members. The Prime Minister's Bureau stressed this evening that there will be no negotiations with the PLO. Voices within the Labor Party and the defense establishment, however, have recently been heard saying that any kind of negotiating process with Palestinian notables would first require a seal of approval from the PLO. More details on this matter from our political correspondent Yig'al Goren in the studio:

Prime Minister Shamir has met with influential notables from the territories. This was revealed by the Prime Minister's Bureau for the first time this evening. The meetings were held under a veil of strict secrecy to protect the Palestinians involved. The purpose of the contacts was to search for a way toward direct negotiations with Palestinians who do not belong to the PLO. The Prime Minister's Bureau reported that these meetings will continue. Avi Pazner, the prime minister's media adviser, refused to disclose any information about the names or posts held by the Palestinian notables. These facts were reported to me tonight in connection with U.S. Secretary of State Baker's assertion that Israel would have to negotiate with the PLO if it does not begin talks with Palestinians from inside the territories. Sources in the Prime Minister's Bureau say that Baker's statements should not be inflated. This is no confrontation between the two countries, but rather an exploratory shot in the dark by a new administration. We are making a great effort to set up negotiations with Palestinians in the territories, but we will not under any conditions negotiate with the PLO. Not even indirectly.

In the Labor Party, a brand new tone was heard last night. During yesterday's meeting, the Labor Party ministers expressed their unequivocal opinion that there is no real chance of launching negotiations with Palestinians in the territories without prior approval from the PLO. Consequently, we must strive for Israeli-Palestinian negotiations with the PLO's blessing. This, actually, is what the defense minister advocates. The defense minister recently instructed military governors in the territories to intensify their meetings with Palestinians and to meet larger and more diverse groups. The Labor Party ministers also contend that the dialogue between the United States and the PLO may contribute to reducing tensions in the region.

Shim'on Peres, vice prime minister and finance minister, commented on Baker's statement today:

[Begin videorecording] [Peres] What is the PLO? If the PLO constitutes ideas, we do not censor ideas. Look, what are we talking about? About whether the Palestinian nation is the same as the PLO, or the PLO is the same as the Palestinian nation. That is the question. Do we have to identify ourselves with an organization, or should we identify with a nation? That is the question. If it is an organization, we must state that we cannot accept an organization that deals in terror. If we are talking about a nation, if the Palestinians identify with the PLO's views, that is fine. Do we censor their ideas or forbid them to seek advice from whoever they wish? They can think whatever they like. The only thing we forbid is for them to attempt to cause us harm, and that is our right.

[Unidentified correspondent] In other words, Baker's statements are not binding on us?

[Peres] Of course they do not obligate us, but that is not the point. After all, we do not want to cause a rift with the United States. Let us be serious. There is no supreme judge sitting high above in heaven saying the United States is right, or Israel is right. The problem facing Israel is how to achieve the highest degree of coordination with the United States. We do not want to lose the United States. We do not want to lose the friendship and support of the United States. We do not even want to lose the role it could fulfill. In my opinion, at present we are emitting slightly confused messages. What is all this talk suddenly about the Jordanian option? A Jordanian option used to exist. By the way, the Jordanian option is totally out of the question without an international conference. Today, in my opinion, Jordan has a part to play, but we are without a Jordanian option. We lost it. [end recording]

Avi'em Sela' Not Working at Electronics Firm

TA1703152589 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1500 GMT 17 May 89

[Text] The affair of Colonel Avi'em Sela': His confidants say he does not work at the El-Op electronics company, and Defense Ministry sources clarify that what is involved is a private company that has nothing to do with the ministry.

This morning the U.S. Pentagon spokesman in Washington said that if Avi'em Sela' is indeed involved with El-Op, serious problems will arise regarding the company's deals with the U.S. Army, since the United States accuses Sela' of recruiting Jonathan Pollard as a spy for Israel. Israeli Army sources told our correspondent Karmela Menashe that a few weeks ago Col Sela' was given leave and detailed to El-Op, where he was slated to serve as an adviser for the promotion of special Air Force projects. Nevertheless, negotiations on his employment with the company were not successful, and he will soon be returning to the army.

Protest Lodged Over Shevardnadze Cairo Remarks

TA1703122489 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 17 Mar 89 p 2

[Report by Ilan Kfir]

[Text] Israel has recently lodged a diplomatic protest with the Soviet Union over the contents of a speech delivered by Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze in Cairo.

According to a report that belatedly reached the Israeli Foreign Ministry, Shevardnadze lashed out at Israel during a meeting with Egyptian parliamentarians and warned that if it refused to talk to the PLO and consequently curbed the peace process, the implementation of sanctions would be contemplated. He added that if Israel sabotaged Palestinian legitimacy, this would undermine its own legitimacy.

HADASHOT has learned that Foreign Minister Moshe Arens initiated the protest to the Soviet Union before his departure for the United States. The protest was conveyed through the Soviet consular delegation in Israel. In the protest, Israel criticizes Shevardnadze's warnings and argues that there is no room for such remarks in relations between countries.

There has been no change in Soviet-Israeli relations since the Arens-Shevardnadze meeting in Cairo. The Soviets have not yet set a date for the talks between experts that were decided upon in the Cairo meeting. Jerusalem believes that the Soviet Union will await the results of Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's visit to Washington before deciding its next moves.

PRC, Soviet Officials Arrive for Book Fair

TA1103171589 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 11 Mar 89

[Text] Two PRC representatives arrived in Israel for the international Jerusalem book fair opening tomorrow night. They are Mrs (Feng Zi), one of the heads of the Chinese writers association, and her Jewish husband, a PRC citizen, Mr Sidney Shapiro, called in Chinese (Shabu Li). Shapiro, a New York born researcher, was granted his citizenship some 25 years ago.

The fair will be attended by a Soviet delegation for the first time. The delegation will be headed by Yuriy Zhizhin who is the USSR Ministry of Culture official in charge of book dissemination inside and outside of the USSR.

UK No Longer Against 'Mini-Palestinian State'

TA1703101889 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 17 Mar 89 p A2

[Report by London correspondent Joseph Finkelstone]

[Excerpt] A major change has occurred in Britain's policy: It no longer objects to the establishment of a mini-Palestinian state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

This emerges from remarks made by William Waldegrave, minister of state at the British Foreign Office.

Until this week the British Government had objected to the establishment of a Palestinian state, and Thatcher explicitly stated as much. The change occurred in the wake of Waldegrave's recent talks with King Husayn in Amman, at the end of which he said that Britain must take into consideration the king's strong predilection in favor of a totally independent state. Thatcher conferred with Husayn this week, and it is believed that she informed the king of the new tendencies of the British Government.

When I asked him whether King Husayn had shown a willingness to resume a central role in peace talks with Israel, Waldegrave replied: "He is definitely saying the exact opposite. He says that the decision to disengage from the West Bank was not a tactical, but rather a strategic one." [passage omitted]

Shamir Discusses Relations With Egypt

TA1603193389 Jerusalem Television Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by Shlomo Ganor in Jerusalem on 16 March; in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles—videorecorded]

[Text] [Ganor] Mr Prime Minister, 10 years have passed since the peace agreement with Egypt was signed. Although a decade is a short time in the history of nations, how do you evaluate relations between the two countries?

[Shamir] First of all, the peace we made with Egypt was a revolutionary step. It was instrumental in bringing about a decisive change in the political situation in the Middle East and in relations between Israel and the Arab countries. Nevertheless, 10 years later one can say that it did not bring about a revolutionary change. Up to now, relations with all the other Arab countries have not significantly changed, although the peace with Egypt has had a positive influence. We would, of course, like the peace to be complete and bring about full normalization in relations between us and Egypt.

I am certain that had there been normal relations in all aspects of life, it would have had positive implications for Egypt and us and would have reflected on our relations with the other Arab countries. Egypt, however, has lost part of its peace momentum, and its leaders apparently do not think that they can make further progress along this path.

[Ganor] Now that Tabah has been returned, do you think that all the obstacles between the two countries have been overcome?

[Shamir] In my view, the Tabah issue was not an obstacle. There are always differences of opinion. We could have solved it differently. Egypt should have shown us that this issue—which was solved according to Egypt's demands—is having a positive influence on Israeli-Egyptian relations, but so far I do not see that.

[Ganor] How do you expect Egypt to strengthen the foundations of peace?

[Shamir] First, normal relations without any reservations, without any limitations, in commerce, trade, cultural exchanges, and in the attitude of the Egyptian media toward Israel. That is quite enough.

[Ganor] You said that Egypt has lost the political momentum. What are you referring to, Mr Prime Minister?

[Shamir] It has lost the momentum to make any advance in developing and promoting peace with Israel. I am referring to exactly those points that I mentioned several seconds ago. The issue is one of full normalization. After signing the peace agreement, we also signed all sorts of other accords on those issues, but they have not been implemented.

[Ganor] Egypt links the development of relations, which you refer to for advancing the peace process, with solving the Palestinian issue. Is this linkage acceptable to you?

[Shamir] I do not think there can be any linkage [preceding word in English]. It is not implied in the peace accord. On the contrary, it says explicitly that peace with Egypt stands on its own; therefore, there cannot be a linkage with issues that are not part of the agreement. I would suggest, however, on such a festive day, the 10th anniversary of the peace accord, not concentrating on differences of opinion.

[Ganor] Nevertheless, sir, we cannot ignore them.

[Shamir] Of course, reality does not permit it.

[Ganor] Still, what do you expect from Egypt? What sort of role do you expect it to play? Are you designating any specific role for it in the peace process for it to act as a partner?

[Shamir] I think that it is in Egypt's interest not to remain isolated from all the other Arab countries by being the only country to have peaceful relations with Israel. It should be interested in having peace extended across the entire Middle East. It should help in developing peaceful relations between Israel and other Arab countries. There are many ways to achieve that.

[Ganor] Mr Prime Minister, how would you reply to those who claim that you abstained from voting on the Camp David accords and that Foreign Minister Arens voted against them? In their view, it reflects on you and your government's attitude to the entire peace process.

[Shamir] I have explained more than once in the past that this claim is not correct, since once the Knesset ratified the peace agreement we are committed to it. When I was foreign minister, and in my other positions, as well... [changes thought] Moshe Arens in his present post as foreign minister is doing everything to develop and strengthen the relations of peace between us and Egypt and to extend the peace process. I believe that our foreign minister's interlocutors in Egypt know that.

[Ganor] Is it not surprising, Mr Prime Minister, that you have still not met with an Egyptian leader, for instance President Mubarak?

[Shamir] I believe it is part of that same abnormality. Of course, it is not right. First of all, I did meet with him once, but a long time ago. The very fact that a meeting between us has become something that must be bargained over and argued over has a negative impact on the essence of relations. I believe that personal contacts are very important and can be very useful.

[Ganor] To overcome the negative situation, I remember that in your office there used to be a telephone that linked the Prime Minister's Office directly to the Egyptian president's office. Do you believe that such a telephone link should be restored?

[Shamir] It is not a matter of a telephone link. We are not talking about the technical side of the connection. There should be frequent personal contacts without qualifications, and I think that if there were such contacts we could certainly make progress.

[Ganor] Is there a basis for such contacts?

[Shamir] Yes, certainly.

[Ganor] Do you expect such foundations for contacts to develop?

[Shamir] You know that I never give up. I continue to believe and hope that it will happen.

[Ganor] Mr Prime Minister, should the model of the peace between us and Egypt also be the model between us and the other Arab countries when peace comes?

[Shamir] It does not have to be exactly the same model. We have said that more than once; each country has its own specific conditions; also, there are objective considerations. There is an expression in the peace accord: in accordance with the situation, or conditions, and that will be the case.

[Ganor] In conclusion, Mr Prime Minister, what is the meaning of peace on the basis of your experience and on the basis of what you expect from that peace?

[Shamir] First and foremost, peace means no war, but that is only the first stage, I would say the lowest stage of the peace. Real peace means living together, continuous contacts; in this case, for instance, thousands of Israelis and Egyptians in daily contact in many fields of life, such as we find between the various European countries, which fought each other as sworn enemies not long ago.

[Ganor] Are we coming close to that situation?

[Shamir] We are still far away from it.

Commentary Examines Syrian Military Intentions

TA1003162589 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 10 Mar 89 p 5

[Commentary by Avi Bnayahu: "There Are Signs"]

[Text] The strong statements issued by top-level sources in Israel and Damascus over the last month appear to indicate an atmosphere of some tension, as well as a mutual fear of a military initiative. What causes the chief of staff and the commander of the Northern Command to express themselves so sharply regarding the Syrian desire to instigate a military initiative? Why does the chief of staff rush to signal a request to the political echelon for their legitimization of a preemptive strike against Syria? What lies behind the extreme speech made by Hafiz al-Asad over the weekend?

The feeling in Israel is that, despite Syria's severe economic problems, its president has decided on a drastic change in his priorities and will divert more and more resources to build up the army. The estimation is that Syria, sensing an incipient political process in the region and feeling isolated, would not hesitate to exercise a military option to achieve a political objective.

The head of the Institute for Strategic Studies and the former Intelligence Branch chief, Major General Aharon Yariv (res.) says that "in the last few months there are signs within Syria that demand that Israel and the Israel Defense Force remain alert and at high readiness."

What are those signs? Despite being in dire economic straits, Syria continues purchasing armaments in huge quantities. The Syrian Army has recently returned to large-scale military exercises in attack formations, practicing mainly the combat doctrine of penetration.

In addition, the Soviet Union continues supplying Syria with sophisticated weapons. New MiG-29 planes continue landing in Damascus to be incorporated into the Syrian Air Force, and a new deal governing the procurement of Sukhoi-24's is in the process of being signed. In an interview with TIME magazine, the commander of the Northern Command, Yosi Peled, revealed that an incident had occurred recently involving Israeli aircraft, which had mistakenly crossed the Golan Heights' line, and Russian MiGs. All of the above, in addition to an analysis of the political map, pose serious questions as to the steps Al-Asad might take, knowing that his freedom of action is limited.

Commander of the Northern Command Yosi Peled views 1989 as "the year of decision," in the course of which Syria will decide to either launch a military operation against Israel, or turn to the road leading to negotiations.

Aharon Yariv, former head of the Army Intelligence Branch explains: "The Syrians are aware of the political developments in the region, and they find themselves quite isolated. They regard themselves as powerful enough to torpedo any political accord they oppose, whether through a military move against us, or against someone else. In my opinion, the very fact of its isolation and the lack of any coalition of Arab states on the Eastern Front may lead Syria to initiate military action. The continuing flow of arms into Syria gives Al-Asad a feeling of power and spurs him to be more daring. It should be made clear that the Syrian Army today is superior to that of a year ago. It has an advantage in manpower in the event of a surprise attack—before we can recruit the reserve units—and that is why, judging by recent evidence, we must be ready, alert, and wary."

Yariv emphasizes: "Al-Asad, today, does not need a coalition of Arab states against Israel. Obviously it would be welcomed and he will look for allies, but if he does not find them he will go to war without them."

All the military experts tend to estimate that the Syrian motivation is especially increasing in the wake of the political process and the Soviet involvement in the region. According to a defense establishment source, the "further the political process continues, leaving them isolated, the faster they will attempt military action."

The situation is far from clear regarding the Soviet Union's attitude toward Syria. Chief of Staff Dan Shomron defined the issue by saying that he senses "double talk" coming from the Soviet Union. On one hand, the USSR participates in the political process and calls for restraint and disarmament, while on the other it continues to arm Syria.

The labor pains accompanying the delivery of Soviet weapons to Damascus are not slight by any means. In the past, Syria had first pick of any new weapon fresh off the Soviet production line, even before members of the Warsaw Pact. Now the Soviets strictly differentiate between defensive and offensive weapons. Thus Iraq and India received the MiG-29's before Syria and this was probably also the case with the Sukhoi-24's. It appears that the Soviets are willing to show the West that they are putting moderate pressure on Syria, but it is premature to disregard Moscow's attitudes if its major client in the Middle East is Syria. The fact is that Syria hardly ever pays money for its armaments. Its economic situation is extremely grave and its foreign currency reserves are at an unprecedented low. Despite these facts, 60 percent of Syria's entire budget is channeled toward the military buildup and the maintenance of a gigantic regular army. Israel believes that Damascus has decided on new priorities in the direction of a military operation.

An additional worrisome factor is the long border between Israel and Syria. The border today stretches from the meeting point in the southern Golan Heights, to the sea along the entire Lebanese front. The Syrian Army currently has an entire division deployed in Lebanon, controls large sections of the country, and has even built emergency tank trenches and missile silos in the Al-Biqa' area. All military experts estimate that Israel will have to hold the Syrian Army in check along a long front that includes the Lebanese sector in the event of an attack.

This was the backdrop for Chief of Staff Dan Shomron's speech at Tel Aviv University several days after his return from Washington. On the surface, his statements on a "preemptive war" seem hasty and unfeasible. An analysis of the entire lecture, however, coupled with some familiarity with the situation and the several disadvantages the Israel Defense Force [IDF] is saddled with, plus the cumulative experience acquired in previous wars, testify to the fact that Shomron's definition of a "preemptive war" (when we know for sure that there will indeed be a war) as "legitimate and moral" is correct.

Chief of Staff Shomron stressed that the IDF must retain its capacity for initiative. He pointed out the difficulty Israel would face in the event of a protracted war, the exhaustion and massive amounts of casualties, and defined the IDF's objective in a war as "achieving a swift victory."

In the meantime, Israel is carefully following all military and political developments in Damascus and in the region. The trauma shared by all the IDF's senior command is that the next war, if it is forced upon us, will start like the Yom Kippur war and end like the Lebanon war.

There is a saying in Arabic, which translated freely into Hebrew says: "I am the bullet in your barrel, fire me!"

Will Al-Asad fire the bullet?

Territories Medical Complaints 'Groundless'

TA1703095689 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0600 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Dr Ram Yishay, the head of the Israel Medical Association, says in a report on the medical services in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza that the numbers of patients sent to hospitals in Israel for treatment has been reduced. This is due to the decision of the leaders of the uprising to treat their casualties in their own hospitals. Dr Yishay stipulates in his report that there is no doubt that improvements are needed in terms of the level of medical professionalism, trained manpower, and the quality of medical institutions in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. The situation, however, is far better than the medical level in the Arab countries, or the situation that prevailed in the territories before the 6-Day War.

The report goes on to say that contagious diseases in the territories have decreased substantially. The report also notes an increase in the number of clinics in the big cities in Judaea and Samaria.

Our correspondent Rina Matzli'ah reports that the study was prepared following a request by Dr (Andre Wynen), the secretary of the World Medical Association, after the organization received many complaints from physicians who toured the territories.

Dr Yishay notes that it has been proven that the tear gas used by the Israeli army has no poisonous effects, nor does it cause miscarriage. He stressed that no doctor is taking part in interrogations of detainees. The report's conclusions say that the Israel Health Association will continue checking all complaints despite the fact that in most cases they have been found to be groundless.

Further on Incidents, Casualties in Territories

Homes Demolished in Buruqin

TA1603194589 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] The security forces today demolished the homes of three men who organized local terrorist cells in the village of Buruqin. The cell members tortured and murdered people whom they suspected of collaborating with Israel.

Curfews Imposed in Gaza

TA1703081989 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0730 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Report by 'Ezra Yanuv]

[Text] A curfew was imposed last night on the Zaytun and Sabra neighborhoods in Gaza City following yesterday's disturbances. The curfew on Khan Yunus is entering its 3d day as the security forces conduct a special operation there. Similar operations are in progress in refugee camps in the central sector of the Gaza Strip, in the wake of a series of riots yesterday.

In other places in the Strip, laborers left for work in Israel as usual. There is an atmosphere of tension today in Gaza, following the demolition of houses belonging to a squad that attempted to eliminate collaborators.

Border Police along with other army units are on the alert in preparation for the end of Friday prayers in the mosques.

[Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 17 March, in a report by Ori Nir and Eytan Rabin on page A2, adds that "very few were reported wounded by gunshots yesterday (one in Gaza and none in the West Bank). Arab sources, however, reported 43 people wounded in beatings that took place as riots were being dispersed in the Gaza Strip. Several people were also reported beaten in the West Bank."]

'Abu Jihad Companies' Formed

TA1703140589 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 17 Mar 89 pp A1, 2

[Report by 'Imanu'el Rosen, Avino'am Bar-Yosef, and 'Ezra Yanuv]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] "The Abu Jihad Companies" is the name of a new group of youngsters in the territories who have decided to step up attacks against Border Police personnel, Israeli army soldiers, and settlers. The group was established in Nabulus with the purpose of escalating the uprising and becoming the spearhead of the so-called "Palestinian Popular Army."

Sources in Nabulus say that Hakim Isma'il Bakkir, who was killed in the local casbah 10 days ago, had been the leader of the group. Palestinian sources in East Jerusalem yesterday likened the "Abu Jihad Companies" to Unit 101, which was set up by Israel [in the early fifties] because it did not want to be identified with certain acts of retaliation. These sources say that the new units, which have begun training in Nabulus and other locations in the territories, will not be officially affiliated with the PLO but will be in contact with Fatah elements. [passage omitted]

Maqsud's Remarks on PLO-U.S. Talks Decried

JN0603162289 Jerusalem in Arabic to the Arab World 1440 GMT 6 Mar 89

["Observation" by 'Ezra Shirazi]

[Text] Dear listeners, Mr Clovis Maqsud, permanent Arab League representative at the United Nations, said last weekend that the dialogue between the United States and the PLO is useful only in conveying Israeli demands. This statement is indeed surprising as it casts doubts on the usefulness of the dialogue, which began less than 3 months ago and that 'Arafat and his aides exerted maximum efforts over many years to achieve. The dialogue was achieved thanks to intensive Arab and non-Arab mediation, and only after Yasir 'Arafat officially and before the entire world announced the PLO's recognition of Israel's right to exist, its acceptance of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and its pledge to renounce terrorism in all forms.

The statement is also surprising since Maqsud is a highly educated man with a Ph.D. and a veteran diplomat of long political experience. A man of this caliber is expected to be well informed on the facts, conservative in his statements, and to avoid dropping to the level of demagogic delusion. But Maqsud intended to delude others by his statement, in which he disregarded a well-known basic fact—namely, that Israel has never been in need of conveying its demands to 'Arafat's organization, nor does it need the United States or any other country to convey its demands to 'Arafat's organization. This is because the current Israeli Government, like its predecessors, deleted in principle 'Arafat's organization from any peace forum. Indeed, the organization deleted itself from the peace equation in light of its charter, its engraved terrorist nature, and its black record, stained as it is with the blood of innocent children, women, and defensless civilians, let alone the fact that the leaders of the organization lack credibility.

'Arafat's organization deleted itself, and is deleted by Israel. However, Israel has never deleted and will never delete the Palestinian people from the peace equation. As far as Israel is concerned, the Palestinian people have never been deleted from the peace equation. On the other hand, this people have been constituting basic element in any peace equation. They have legitimate rights that should be determined in the framework of peaceful negotiations. These rights can only be guaranteed through negotiations and peaceful understanding.

From this premise, the main conclusion to be drawn from these facts is that if the Palestinians want to solve their problem and guarantee their rights, they should first realize that the solution can never be achieved through violence and terrorism. Second, they should realize that wagering on the card of the organizations of sabotage and terrorism is betting on a losing and ill-boding card and that the responsibility for finding qualified representatives to enter into peace negotiations with Israel lies basically on their shoulders.

Papers Comment on Mideast Peace Developments

'Arafat Urged Not To Visit Israel

JN1603173989 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic
15 Mar 89 p 22

["An Arab Opinion" column by Mahmud al-Rimawi: "A Lesson We Learned"]

[Text] We would very much like talk about a visit to Tel Aviv by the PLO chief to end, in the same way that talk about a confederal arrangement grouping four countries including Israel has come to an end. We agree with Shaykh 'Abd al-Hamid al-Sayih, speaker of the Palestine National Council, in believing Yasir 'Arafat is in no political or psychological mood for such a visit, especially as Israel is still occuping Arab lands.

It is one thing for adversaries to sit down at the conference table at the end of the day and quite another for one party to a dispute to propose that he visit enemy territory before the fighting comes to an end. Ideally, negotiations should take place at a UN-sponsored international conference where the Arab parties concerned would be present to coordinate their positions and the strategic balance of the two superpowers would come into play. As far as the Arab-Israeli dispute is concerned, bilateral, direct, and separate deals are not an option.

A priority objective of the diplomatic and political battle should be to isolate our enemy further, neutralize its "deterrent force," and disarm it politically. Our objective cannot possibly be to appease our enemy, recognize its superiority, and concede that the balance of forces is in its favor. The notion of an 'Arafat visit to Tel Aviv can only encourage Israeli arrogance, intransigence, and extremism and cause further escalation of Israeli repression. In the meantime, such talk is bound to create confusion and disorientation in the national and popular psyche. Further, it threatens to cause dissension that the Palestinians and the Arab nation, at this juncture, can well do without. It is most important, at this stage, that the intifadah [uprising] be consolidated and be given every kind of Arab and international support to boost national and pan-Arab confidence and raise Arab morale in the face of our enemy.

Given that the idea of a visit has been rejected outright by the enemy and that it would be in conflict with the national and wider pan-Arab conscience, the proposition would seem to be a virtual invitation by 'Arafat for the enemy to incarcerate him. While it is considered an honor to be captured in action, there is no precedent for a fighter giving himself up voluntarily in order to embarrass the enemy.

If the idea of the visit was floated, as seems to be the case, as some kind of a tactical ploy, then it has certainly missed its target, and that far from hurting Israel, it could inflict grievous damage on Palestinian and Arab fortunes. Made under the pressure of transient, exasperated impatience, the suggestion that 'Arafat may not refuse a visit to Tel Aviv sounds a strange and sensational proposition; it, however, threatens to strike at the heart of national and Arab interests.

The enemy will not be made to acknowledge and concede our legitimate, national rights by a ceremonial visit. This requires marshalling Arab forces. It is indeed regrettable that we should be advancing the arguments that were once used by the very people who are now being targeted for criticism.

Shamir's U.S. Visit Previewed

JN1503081089 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
15 Mar 89 p 4

[Editorial: "Remove the Fog"]

[Text] Initial reports about Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens' explanatory talks with President George Bush and Secretary of State James Baker speak of disagreement between the two sides on how to prepare the groundwork for a durable and just settlement of the Palestinian question. Whether this apparent discord between Washington and Tel Aviv would lead ultimately to a collision course between them is still too early to tell. In the course of the next few weeks, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir is expected to make a call on the White House in a bid to convince the American side of his stance and perspective on the overall Arab-Israeli conflict including the Palestinian case.

What seems to separate the American and Israeli sides now centres on the American call on Israel to come up with creative new ideas—distinguished from the sterile old ideas that Shamir and his clique have been offering thus far—on how to defuse the situation between Israel and the Palestinians in preparation for eventual settlement. The Palestinian side is rightly rejecting any reciprocal initiative from their side touching on the intifada before there is an agreement on a Middle East plan to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflicts, for fear that ending the Palestinian intifada prematurely would be tantamount to putting the cart before the horse. As Nabil Sha'th, chairman of the Political Committee of the Palestine National Council, has said at a symposium of Palestinians and Israeli peace activists in New York Monday: "Let's put the horse where it should be and the cart where it should be. And the horse is the peace agreement." Surely Washington knows only two well that the uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is the trump card in the hands of the Palestinian side and to relinquish it precipitately is a national suicide.

Meanwhile the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflicts is destined once again to await the impending talks between President George Bush and the leaders of the Middle Eastern countries most directly involved. President Bush cannot expect to hear anything new from the Arab leaders for they have said their peace [as published] a long time ago. And it seems he will not hear anything new from the Israeli Prime Minister when he visits the U.S. in April. What is called for therefore, is something new and encouraging from Washington to break the logjam and untie the knot in the Middle East. By speaking more clearly and forcefully on the conceptual framework of a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflicts, the White House can remove the fog that clouds the way of any such solution. If that entails a showdown with Israel, so be it. Americans would be doing Israel and the Israelis a great favour by standing firm on the side of a permanent and just resolution in the Middle East. As the meeting with Moshe Arens in Washington did not produce tangible results, one would hope that the forthcoming meeting with Yitzhaq Shamir will be conducted in a more forceful manner to assure a more positive outcome.

New U.S. Measures Called For

JN1603164389 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 16 Mar 89 pp 18, 20

["An Arab Opinion" Column by Mahmud al-Rimawi: "The First U.S. Decision of Its Kind"]

[Text] The U.S. decision to urge Tel Aviv to prepare for negotiations with the PLO is the first of its kind in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The United States not only rejected and ignored the Israeli Government's call for Washington to halt the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue, but also urged Tel Aviv to prepare for negotiations with the PLO, which are inevitable.

Washington has chosen the visit of Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens to the United States, with apparently intentional timing, to pressure the Likud government to change its intransigent and traditional positions, which do not correspond to the new political facts in the region and the world. Both President Bush and Secretary of State James Baker, were clear in their call on Israeli Minister Arens to inform his prime minister that he must propose new ideas during his scheduled visit to Washington. In diplomatic and political protocol, this is a sign that Washington is not ready for—or at least will not welcome—Shamir's visit if he does not bring new ideas—that is, if he does not abandon his previous position and show willingness to cooperate with current peace efforts in the region.

Undoubtedly, the U.S. position constitutes a very important development. It constitutes a quantitative departure from the traditional U.S. policy, which was based on ignorance of Palestinian political rights and the refusal to recognize PLO as the representative of its people.

The logical consequence of this is for the U.S. Administration to translate this development into practical and tangible measures that will affect the peace process in the region positively. These measures may include:

— Developing their dialogue with the Palestinians from the level of examining conditions and intentions to the level of a substantial and deep dialogue on practical means to advance the peace process in the interests of all parties.

— Recognizing the PLO, reopening of its office in the U.S. capital, and ending the policy of distust and apprehension against the PLO. The role of mediator implies a certain degree of honesty and justice. It also requires that the mediator keep an equal distance from both sides.

— While Washington is still declaring the firmness and continuity of its alliance with Tel Aviv, logic demands that—even if only to show good intentions—Washington must no longer distance itself from the PLO, but must recognize and normalize relations with it—if we were to use the term—to give both parties confidence in its role—as its role must and should be.

— The third measure stipulates that Washington must depart from its conservative and hesitant position on the proposed international peace conference and quickly respond to the call to form a preparatory committee. The conference will be the arena for negotiations between the parties under the auspices of the United Nations with U.S. and Soviet guarantees. The negotiations preceding this conference will constitute the contacts and preparations for substantial and serious negotiations in that long-awaited conference.

Washington has much to do to revive and advance the peace process, but without reducing the role of others or encroaching on their rights. Although negotiations and contacts between U.S., Palestinian, and Israeli sides are very important, their importance lies in preparing the atmosphere and paving the way for a serious and effective international conference with the participation of all sides concerned—including both Arab and Soviet—and the other UN Security Council permanent members. This is the required mechanism for reaching a comprehensive and just solution to the conflict, which is better than any possible U.S.-Palestinian-Israeli solution, in spite of their great importance and qualitative advances, as some of the recent U.S. trends are suggesting.

U.S. 'Military Experts' Wounded in Shelling

NC1703092389 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] According to the Abu Dhabi newspaper AL-ITTIHAD, two American military experts, of a group of seven American experts, were wounded in last Tuesday's shelling of the Defense Ministry in Al-Yarzah. The American experts are supervising the training of Lebanese Army artillery units.

The paper says that the Army has been furnished with electronic equipment that can pinpoint the locations from which shells are being fired.

Evacuated to Cyprus

NC1703123589 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] According to today's Abu Dhabi newspaper AL-ITTIHAD, two American military experts, of a group of seven American experts supervising the training of Lebanese Army artillery units, were wounded in last Tuesday's shelling of the Defense Ministry in Al-Yarzah. The paper notes that the Army has been furnished with electronic equipment that can pinpoint the locations from which shells are being fired.

Some media have reported that U.S. Ambassador John McCarthy, who visited the Army command some 30 minutes after the shelling, supervised the evacuation of the two experts to Cyprus aboard a U.S. helicopter.

British Embassy Damaged in Car Bomb Explosion

NC1703103389 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] At about 1050 today, a car bomb went off near the Abu Habib bakeries in Jall al-Dh'ib. The bakery was full of people when the explosion took place, resulting in many casualties. A huge fire broke out, which was seen from far away. REUTER quoted people in West Beirut as saying that they heard the strong explosion in their areas.

According to other information, the explosion may have been targeted against the British Embassy in the area. The embassy building was heavily damaged. It cannot be confirmed yet whether the explosion was a criminal operation like previous ones or whether it was directed against the British Embassy in light of what has been said about The Satanic Verses written by British author Salman Rushdie. According to preliminary reports, 10 people were killed and 30 wounded. [passage omitted]

10 Killed, 60 Wounded

NC1703114389 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Excerpts] About 10 people were killed and more than 60 others were wounded in the crime of the car bomb detonated near the Abu Habib bakeries in Jall al-Dhi'b at about 1050 today. [passage omitted]

The car bomb was rigged with about 40 kg of highly explosive material. The explosion made a crater 80 cm deep and 140 cm in diameter. The explosion heavily damaged vehicles, shops, and buildings. [passage omitted]

UK Embassy Closes Consular Section in Beirut

NC1303184189 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 13 Mar 89

[Text] The British Embassy in Lebanon has announced that the visa and consular sections will be closed to the public from tomorrow, Tuesday, until further notice. The embassy explained that pending visa and passport applications will be processed as soon as possible, and no new applications will be accepted.

Lebanese Forces Deploy; Military Alert Declared

NC1603121589 (Clandestine) Voice of the People in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Israeli radio has cited Lebanese Forces' officials as saying that the deployment of the Lebanese Forces personnel in Al-Ashrafiyah, 'Ayn al-Rummanah, and the war council vicinity in Al-Karantina is a precautionary measure against the continued fighting between General 'Awn and the Progressive Socialist Party and that the differences with Gen 'Awn are completely over.

The Lebanese Forces have declared alert measure 3 and instructed their men to remain in complete military readiness. Last night, Lebanese Forces units, supported by tanks, deployed in East Beirut and its suburbs as well as on the coastal line.

Deployment in Beirut Confirmed

NC1603074389 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Security sources in the eastern area have affirmed that the Phalangist forces [Lebanese Forces] have deployed in East Beirut for the second time since they signed an agreement with Michel 'Awn's Army on 24 February. That agreement restricted the movement of the Phalangist forces. Armed groups of these militias were seen yesterday patrolling areas under their control, particularly the coastal road leading to East Beirut and the area surrounding the Phalangist forces headquarters in Al-Karantina. Tanks also were positioned in a tunnel which was closed to traffic. According to informed sources in East Beirut, the Phalangist forces have deployed 35 tanks in Al-Karantina.

Syrian Forces Withdraw From W. Beirut Positions

NC1603145089 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1345 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] According to AFP, Syrian forces have withdrawn from some of their positions in West Beirut in the wake of the shelling of these posts 2 days ago. The agency said the Syrian occupation forces have evacuated their checkpoints on major crossroads including the intersection on the Beirut international airport road.

Meanwhile, cars fitted with loudspeakers roamed West Beirut streets, urging the public to stay in safe areas and procure necessities.

In another development, Syrian forces today closed the roads leading to the Monte Verde crossing to facilitate the transfer of Syrian military reinforcements of tanks and rocket launchers to Kafr Silwan.

In the mountain area, machinegun fire was observed to have been directed at Army positions in 'Ayn al-Sayyidah from Progressive Socialist Party gunmen's posts in Qusur 'Alayh.

Fire on Beirut Port, W. Beirut

NC1603153489 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Excerpts] According to the latest reports, the Syrians and their allies have flared up the security situation in the capital and the mountain, firing 19 shells at Beirut port since 1615 today. The warehouses in the port were specifically targeted. Three shells had fallen on the port this morning, but operations continued normally.

At 1636, a shell fell in the commercial markets. We have just been informed that the shelling of Beirut port caused a fire, which reportedly broke out on a docked ship. Anti-aircraft fire is now being exchanged in the port area. Meanwhile, we learned a short while ago that another shell struck Beirut port and that four others fell in the commercial markets area.

In another development, intermittent clashes involving the use of light- and medium-caliber machineguns are taking place between the Lebanese Army and the Progressive Socialist Party gunmen manning positions on the mountains. In addition, gun fire reportedly was directed at the Sodeco-al-Tayyunah-Qasqas line this afternoon. [passage omitted]

The BAYRUT NEWS AGENCY has reported that the Syrian 54th Armored Brigade deployed in the Al-Shuwayfat area and took up combat positions in the Al-Shuwayfat desert and nearby areas during the early hours of the day. The Syrian forces also reinforced their presence in West Beirut, deploying three artillery battalions armed with various sized caliber guns. They also established emplacements in Al-Awza'i and as far as Al-Ramlah al-Bayda', where Korean-made 40-nozzle 107-mm rocket launchers were observed. A Syrian rocket launcher was observed to have been installed near the Phoenicia Hotel in the hotels area today. [passage omitted]

Clashes Reported in Beirut's Commercial Markets

NC1703141789 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1400 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] The commercial markets' contact lines are now the scene of clashes involving machineguns and rockets. Two shells reportedly fell on a rooftop in Burj Abu Haydar. Meanwhile, East Beirut sources said several shells fell at Beirut Port this afternoon.

Fighting 'Raging' on W. Beirut Combat Lines

NC1603200489 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1945 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Fighting involving the use of light- and medium-caliber machineguns has been raging between the Lebanese Army and gunmen in West Beirut along the Al-Shiyah and 'Ayn al-Rummanah combat lines since 1945. Meanwhile, tension is simmering along the commercial area's lines following the clashes that took place there in the afternoon.

'Guarded Calm' Prevails 17 Mar

NC1703071989 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Excerpts] Guarded calm prevails on the combat lines in the capital, the southern suburb, and the mountain following clashes which broke out yesterday afternoon and lasted until 2130. Rockets and machineguns were used in these clashes. [passage omitted]

The Syrian occupation forces and their allies yesterday reinforced their positions in West Beirut, the suburb, and the mountain. According to security reports, the Syrians have placed artillery guns and rocket launchers close to hospitals, government offices, and schools, and in residential areas in West Beirut and the suburb. [passage omitted]

In West Beirut, an explosion took place in front of the sleep comfort shop in Al-Hamra, a few meters away from a roadblock of the Syrian occupation forces. The Shaykh Subhi al-Salih forces claimed responsibility for the blast, which caused considerable property damage according to security sources.

Sniper Fire Directed at Druze Mountain Positions

NC1603143489 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1400 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Heavy machinegun fire was directed at 'Aytat from the hotel area in Suq al-Gharb this afternoon. Meanwhile, sniper fire is still being directed at Duhur al-'Abbadiyah and Shuit from 'Awn's militia positions in 'Arayya.

Over 40 Killed, 120 Injured in Shelling 14 Mar

NC1403173389 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 1530 GMT 14 Mar 89

[Excerpt] The successive waves of artillery, rocket, and tank shelling of innocent citizens this morning and afternoon led to the death of more than 40 persons. Over 120 were injured. [passage omitted]

Air Force Plane Draws Ground Fire Over Al-Shuf

NC1603102989 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Anti-aircraft fire from positions in Al-Na'imah and Al-Jiyah [in Al-Shuf area] was directed at a Lebanese Air Force hawker-hunter fighter. The plane was conducting a surveillance mission over Lebanese territorial waters. The plane completed its mission before returning to base.

Ministry Warns Ships To Avoid Beirut, Juniyah

NC1703150889 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Statement Issued by the Directorate of Maritime Transport in the Ministry of Public Works and Transport in Beirut on 17 March]

[Text] The Directorate of Maritime Transport earlier warned ships to stay away from the ports of Beirut and Juniyah, because of the disturbed security situation in the vicinity of these ports. Some ships failed to heed this warning. They were subjected to military operations and one of them was heavily damaged.

Therefore, being very anxious to ensure safe navigation in Lebanese waters, the directorate reiterates its warning to ship owners and shipping and insurance companies to avoid using the ports of Beirut and Juniyah until further notice.

Al-Qadhdhafi, 'Awn Discuss Conflict Mediation

NC1703125589 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] It was learned today that Colonel al-Qadhdhafi had a long telephone conversation with Prime Minister General Michel 'Awn and exchanged views on the recent developments in Lebanon. It was also learned that Libya is trying to play the role of mediator between Lebanon and Syria. It is known that Syrian President al-Asad is in Libya, where he arrived unexpectedly.

Junblatt Leaves For Talks With Syrian Officials

NC1603160089 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 1530 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Progressive Socialist Party leader Walid Junblatt has left for Damascus, where he will hold talks with ranking Syrian officials on developments in the Lebanese situation. The talks will also deal with ways to confront the military conflagration initiated by the Al-Yarzah [Defense Ministry] clique.

'Awn, Shaykh Sabah Discuss Recent Developments

NC1503121589 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 15 Mar 89

[Text] Prime Minister General Michel 'Awn received a telephone call this morning from Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, head of the Arab good offices committee on Lebanon. During their conversation, the two officials discussed recent developments in Lebanon.

Gen 'Awn briefed Shaykh al-Sabah on developments during the past 24 hours. For his part, Al-Sabah appealed to Gen 'Awn to take actions that would calm the situation and would provide a favorable atmosphere for holding the necessary contacts.

It has been learned that, after receiving a cable from Gen 'Awn, Shaykh al-Sabah held contacts with Syrian political leaders yesterday afternoon. He also contacted Dr Salim al-Huss today to review recent developments.

Upon orders from Gen 'Awn, in his capacity as foreign minister, the Foreign Ministry instructed Lebanese ambassadors abroad to brief the governments of the countries to which they are accredited on yesterday's military flare-up. The ministry also instructed the ambassadors to convey to these governments Gen 'Awn's demand for an immediate withdrawn of Syrian troops from Lebanon, as well as the essence of the message which he had sent to Shaykh al-Sabah and Arab League Secretary General Chedli Klibi. It is worth noting that the focus of the message is to find the best way to ensure the quickest withdrawal of the Syrian Army from Lebanon.

Al-Huss Cables Klibi, Al-Sabah on 14 Mar Events

NC1503123989 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 15 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Prime Minister Dr Salim al-Huss received a telephone call from Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and foreign minister. During the conversation, the Kuwaiti minister conveyed the concern of his government and that of the six-member Arab committee over the deteriorating situation in Lebanon. He added that the committee is currently holding the necessary consultations to establish stability and prevent further deterioration.

Meanwhile, Dr Salim al-Huss cabled Arab League Secretary General Chedli Klibi and Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah. In the message he said: We urge the Arab League and the Arab good offices committee to send a committee to investigate the massacre and to unravel its circumstances before the Arab public. Perhaps, Dr al-Huss went on to say, this would help to straighten out matters and define stands adequate to end the Lebanese people's continuing ordeal. This also would realize the aspirations of this noble people for peace and stability and achieve the man's legitimate rights in his homeland.

Dr al-Huss added: On this occasion, we hope that the noble Arab committee would continue its praiseworthy efforts to accomplish its noble task to end Lebanon's crisis on bases that would realize the Lebanese peoples' aspirations for justice, equality, and freedom in their homeland. [passage omitted]

Al-Huss on 'Awn's Call for Syrian Withdrawal

NC1703134789 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Commenting on what General 'Awn has termed the liberation war against Syria, Prime Minister Dr Salim al-Huss said: In his talk about a liberation war, Gen 'Awn is sowing a war, but he will not reap what he calls liberation.

Concerning the Syrian brothers, we had said in the past and we repeat now that the Syrians originally entered Lebanon in response to a Lebanese decision. The Syrian brothers have also returned to areas from which they had withdrawn, including the capital, because of a Lebanese decision as well. Prime Minister al-Huss went on to say: The withdrawal of the Syrian brothers from Lebanon will also have to be contingent upon a Lebanese decision, but this decision cannot be made by Gen 'Awn alone. Instead, it has to be made by the Council of Ministers in a unified government when we find the alternative capable of maintaining security and stability in the areas where the Syrian forces are deployed. The Syrian forces are performing a praiseworthy role in preventing the outbreak of new wars.

In conclusion, Prime Minister al-Huss said: Pending the establishment of a legitimate authority capable of replacing the Syrian forces and of shouldering their responsibility, any talk about a so-called liberation war is merely empty talk.

Al-Khatib Denies Syrians in Recent Fighting

NC1603181489 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Major General Sami al-Khatib, acting Army commander, has denied that the Syrian forces in Beirut were involved in the 14 March military operations. He added: The Syrian forces entered Lebanon originally in response to the legitimate authorities' request. We still need them to consolidate our domestic and national security. He accused General 'Awn of seeking to internationalize the Lebanese issue.

In an interview with the magazine AMAL, to be published tomorrow, Maj Gen al-Khatib said that the nationalist Army has a principal role in maintaining internal security. He added: We exercised self-restraint when West Beirut was bombarded out of our desire not to shell our kinfolk in East Beirut. But when the bombardment intensified, we had to return the fire. We will deter any attempt in the future.

Maj Gen al-Khatib disclosed that the Army will receive new arms in the very near future, which will enable it to assume its role in an effective and flawless manner. He said that no one any longer rejects the idea of voluntary service, adding that this issue will be tackled imminently and is likely to commence with everyone's approval within the constraints of the budget.

Maj Gen al-Khatib said: 'Awn should realize that he is not the only individual in Lebanon who can determine its future since he only controls 1 percent of the country geographically. He described 'Awn as an officer who lacks brilliance and who has never assumed a key post in the Army. [sentence as heard] He pointed out that the force that has been sent to the south constitutes a small part of our ambitions. He added: We will strive to continue to send our forces to the south so that they will be able to effectively confront the enemy.

Military Spokesman Comments on Syrian Actions

NC1703134189 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] A military spokesman stated the following: After the Syrian occupation Army fired a shell from 'Ayn 'Nub at the southern suburb this morning and followed it by detonating a car bomb outside the Abu Habib bakery in Jall al-Dhi'b, it called on the citizens in West Beirut to go to the shelters, making them think that they would be shelled from the eastern area. We assure the citizens that such action is not part of the Army's behavior, and we will not be dragged into doing the same. We call on them, their relatives, and friends in the areas which they call nationalist to observe the foreign and agent artillery emplacements to determine what sources are firing at them if shooting is renewed.

Leaders React to 'Awn Measures, Recent Shelling

'Progressive' Forces' Response

NC1603203189 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 2000 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Following a meeting held today at the house of Eng 'Asim Qansuh [regional secretary of the Ba'th Party Organization in Lebanon], the national and progressive parties and forces declared a general mobilization as a preparatory step for defending our people.

A statement issued by the conferees stressed their complete readiness to fight with all means to confront the criminal plot which led to ‘Awn's recent massacres. The statement emphasized that the national and progressive parties and forces adhere to political reform as the only basis for ending the civil war. The statement saluted the popular stand which was expressed by the great response to today's strike.

The conferees instructed the military and information committees to strengthen the unity of national action by mobilizing efforts, supporting the legitimate government, and placing all resources at the disposal of the national Army command.

Al-Husayni Hits ‘Criminal Spirit’

NC1403140789 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 14 Mar 89

[Statement issued by Husayn al-Husayni, Chamber of Deputies speaker, on 14 March—read by announcer]

[Text] The criminal spirit represented in the shelling of the populated and crowded areas and the resulting horrible massacres led to the death and injury of dozens of innocent citizens. What increases the bitterness and atrocity of the crime is that the shells, which the homeland provided to defend it and its sons, have been directed at the hearts of the homeland's sons in the heart of its capital.

The vile and impossible ambitions behind this criminal spirit prompt us not only to condemn and denounce these actions and those behind them, but also to urge the Lebanese public and every capable and influential party to put an end to what is happening and prevent the recurrence of such reckless actions. These actions do not consider the life of innocent citizens and the interests of the homeland, which was in the process of being extricated from its tribulation.

Fadlallah: Army ‘U.S. Militia’

NC1503081489 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 15 Mar 89

[Text] Commenting on the current developments, Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah said: We condemn the barbaric savagery represented in the bombardment of civilians, because it is a major crime. He asserted that he had earlier warmed against such developments. His eminence noted that these acts fall within the framework of pressure being exerted by hidden international quarters which ally themselves with Zionism in order to discredit the decision of the oppressed in this country.

Scholar Fadlallah asked: How can this Army form the foundation on which this country is built? And how can it be the alternative to the militia groups, when it has turned into a U.S. militia?

Hizballah Urges Toppling of Regime

NC1603082189 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Commenting on the massacre which ‘Awn's gangs perpetrated against our people in Beirut, the southern suburb, and the mountain, Hizballah has issued a statement emphasizing that this crime is a repetition of the Al-Nab‘ah, Sibnay, Al-Ghawarinah, 6 February, Bi‘r al-‘Abd, and [word indistinct] massacres. The statement adds that the massacre also reveals the malicious role of Al-Yarzah's Army and its Americanized command, a U.S. and Israeli tool that protects Western interests and defends the plan to partition the Arab and Islamic world.

The Hizballah statement notes the following facts:

1. The Al-Yarzah clique's massacre is a chapter in the war the United States is waging against Lebanon in order to use this country as a means of pressure and attrition to undermine the Syrian position which rejects the proposed U.S. settlement plan.

2. What ‘Awn described as a war of liberation against Syria is an attempt to cover up the Zionist occupation of Lebanese territories and a service to Israel and its reactionary allies, notably the Iraqi tyrant Saddam al-Takriti [Husayn] who has filled Al-Yarzah's Army stores with military hardware and ammunition.

3. The supplies siege which ‘Awn imposed on the areas that reject the hegemony of the racist forces that control the eastern areas is designed to bring them under the control of the system of sectarian privileges and to undermine any attempt to be free of Western influence.

The Hizballah statement adds that, in light of these facts, we urge all Islamic and patriotic political parties to shoulder their historic responsibilities, defend the nation's cause, and delineate a dignified future in which the nation would enjoy justice, liberty, and dignity. This can be done, the statement notes, by drawing up a plan of comprehensive confrontation to topple the regime of sectarian hegemony and repulse the occupation and its agents.

Strike Observed Against ‘Massacre’

NC1603075589 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 0530 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] A general strike will be observed in the nationalist areas today in denunciation of the heinous human massacre committed by Michel ‘Awn's cliques and masters, and in response to the call by the nationalist and progressive parties and forces. These parties and forces have called on Dr Salim al-Huss' government to dismiss ‘Awn, strip him of his military rank, and refer him to trial as a war criminal.

In a statement issued yesterday after meeting in the house of Eng ‘Asim Qansuh, regional secretary of the Ba‘th Party organization in Lebanon, these parties said that the national Army is the only instrument that can resolve the liberation issue. They appealed to the people in the eastern area and all the loyal blocs and forces to act to remove 'Awn.

'Awn's Order of Day Address on 'Occupier Brother'

NC1503161089 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1515 GMT 15 Mar 89

[Text] Prime Minister General Michel 'Awn today addressed our people and kinfolk throughout Lebanon in the order of the day issued to military personnel. He reiterated that the war for the liberation of Lebanon began today, with all the hopes and promises enshrined in liberation. He emphasized that it is the duty of everyone and every Lebanese to resist anyone who may infringe upon land, dignity, or sovereignty. He stressed that in the battles of destiny and dignity there is no difference between a usurper enemy and occupier brother or aggressive friend. Indeed, injustice from kinfolk is more painful and is humiliating to our people in the areas under occupation.

'Awn said that the experience of injustice, humilation, pain, and hegemony is one indivisible whole, because Lebanese blood is the same whatever the injured organ and whether the injury is the east, west, north, or south of the body or in Al-Biqa'. He stressed that the unity of resistance against occupation and humiliation is born from the unity of feeling, pain, and blood. He drew the attention of the military personnel to the old ruse to which those scared of the revolution of liberation resort, represented in the indiscriminate bombardment and misleading information campaign. This is very harmful, he said, but can no longer deceive any Lebanese. He pointed out that all Lebanese now know what the goals and intentions of the foreigners are.

Contents of Saudi, Syrian Contacts Detailed

JN1503162789 Kuwait AL-SIYASAH in Arabic 14 Mar 89 p 1

[By Muhammad 'Anan]

[Text] Beirut—AL-SIYASAH learned that behind-the-scenes Lebanese-Saudi-Syrian contacts are being held to back the Arab committee's efforts and remove the obstacles facing it. These contacts have thus far led to points of agreement among the various parties. The most prominent of these points are the following:

1. To implement the greater administrative Beirut plan after the Lebanese Forces have pledged to completely withdraw from it. This includes the area extending from Khaldah triangle in the south to Nahr al-Kalb in the north.

2. To form a broad Lebanese government that comprises all Lebanese parties under the chairmanship of General 'Awn.

3. To prepare for the elections of the Chamber of Deputies speakership and the republic presidency in a quiet atmosphere.

Accordingly, Gen 'Awn decided to reopen Beirut airport as a prelude to reopening the port crossing point. The religious, political, and party leaderships were acquainted with these points of agreement, which Syria has reportedly fully approved.

It is noteworthy that as soon as they learned of the agreement, U.S. Ambassador John McCarthy and Soviet Ambassador Vasiliy Kolotusha began to practically concentrate on rendering it a success in less than a month.

Papers Criticize Lebanon's 'Awn, Baghdad

JN1703084089 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0545 GMT 17 Mar

["Press Review"]

[Text] Gentlemen, the newspaper editorials deal today with the situation in Lebanon after it was inflamed by the Zionized clique.

Under the headline "'Awn's Clique and the Losing Wager," the newspaper AL-THAWRAH says: 'Awn's violent escalation in Lebanon is a step in a conspiracy to deprive Lebanon of its security and stability and plunge it into division and fragmentation. This scheme also seeks to maintain the minority's control of Lebanon's economic and political destiny and to place Lebanon under Zionist hegemony. This clearly affirms that the military escalation, which was preceded by 'Awn's political escalation—escalation that resulted in a savage massacre of the Lebanese people in West Beirut—will increase the Lebanese people's suffering and place them on the threshold of a destructive war. Only the Zionist enemy will benefit from such a war.

AL-THAWRAH adds: If 'Awn thinks he can impose his hegemony and influenece through terrorism and killing, he is deluded, because the Lebanese people will not let him go unpunished. Moreover, Lebanon has not been and will not be a field in which 'Awn may play out his role against the unity of Lebanese land and people. Just as events have proved the failure of the principle of hegemony, the same events will inevitably dispel both 'Awn's illusions and frustrate his role. This is because domination by force and terrorism is rejected, and so is hegemony established over the bodies of its victims. This hegemony will ultimately fall.

The paper says: Through its crimes, the 'Awn clique has only exposed the disguises that used to conceal the true role assigned to it, which is to maintain the volatile situation in Lebanon and obstruct a solution to it, as a prelude to Lebanon's partition and fragmentation. As a result, this isolationist clique will never be able to achieve its aims because the Lebanese people's resolve is stonger than domination, conspiracy, and the desire for influence and hegemony.

Discussing the same issue, the newspaper AL-BA'TH says: The Zionized ones in Lebanon have forgotten that the Arabism of Lebanon's land, people, and history is sacred, that it is impossible to ignore this sanctity. Those who try to do so deliberately ignore the fact that Syria has offered sacrifices only to foil the conspiracy against the Arab affiliation of the Lebanese land and people. The Syrian presence in Lebanon did not come from nothing. Indeed, the Lebanese authorities, responsible for protecting the Lebanese people's souls and blood from the Zionized ones, was the party that asked for Syrian Arab assistance, not because Syria is a neighbor but becase Syria is committed and bears a pan-Arab responsibility to the sons of the one people in both fraternal countries.

AL-BA'TH adds: No wonder that we see all the liars meeting in one trench. The Baghdad rulers, who found it hard to accept the defeat of their imperialist masters in Iran, are now transferring their conspiratorial activity, seeking the help of the Zionized isolationists in Lebanon. It is a fact that those who value their own peoples' blood cheaply do not find the blood of others' precious. This applies to both the Baghdad rulers and the leaders of isolationism in Lebanon. Therefore, we are not astonished at the fierce Zionist onslaught on the pan-Arab role of Arab Syria in Lebanon. We are also not surprised by the fact that the common element between the bloodthirsty ones and the Zionists is the demand that the pan-Arab efforts be withdrawn from Lebanon in favor of the Zionist protection which fell when the 17 May agreement was abrogated.

Concluding its commentary, AL-BA'TH says: It should be well understood that the Zionist invaders, although having ambitions in Lebanon, are especially seeking to force a breach in the Arab wall, represented by Syria, through Lebanon. However, Syria's militant leader, Hafiz al-Asad, has stated that Lebanon's security is Syria's security and that Lebanon's Arab nature is sacred and will remain so.

U.S. Support for Israel Cited as Peace Obstacle

JN0403144089 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen, it has become clear in the international arena that there is a general movement toward the convening of a UN-sponsored international peace conference on the Middle East with the participation of the five permanent Security Council member states and all the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict. At the same time, the Zionist enemy is trying frustrate this international effort, is still occupying Arab territories, and still refuses to recognize the Palestinian people's valid right to self-determination, repatriation, and an independent state. The United States says that the current state of affairs cannot continue, but it does see what it calls an urgent justification for holding the conference soon.

In view of the Middle East situation, in which events are steadily interacting and escalating on the political level in particular, we should refer to a basic point related to the essence of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Any efforts to achieve peace should be accompanied by an Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories and the restoration of all the Palestinian people's inalienable rights. This means that if the international community does not take this course in a completely effective manner, peace will lack its most basic elements.

Hence, the need for an international conference stems from the fact that it is a framework proposed by the international community and is completely approved by all sides except the Zionist enemy and, to a lesser degree by the United States, which says the conference should be a framework for direct negotiations but should not enjoy powers to take binding resolutions. But detailed and peripheral issues do not concern us here. The international conference is not a goal in itself. Our goal is a just and comprehensive peace in the region, based on its essential elements. A just and comprehensive peace cannot be achieved through unilateral deals, partial solutions, expansion and aggression, or by violating international laws and charters.

As a result, the international conference should lead to the implementation of the international resolutions. Otherwise, it departs from its basic mission and will become the basis for direct negotiations between the occupier of the land and the side whose land was occupied. In other words, it will become a landmine in the path to a desired peace. Peace and occupation cannot occur at the same time, and nations under occupation cannot coexist with the invader, who has confiscated their freedom, usurped their land, killed their children, youths, women, and elderly, falsified their history, and trampled their national and pan-Arab dignity. Real peace should eliminate oppression, killing, defeat, injustice, and slavery.

At the end of his tour of the Middle East, Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze spoke out frankly that hampering peace will lead to military disputes and nuclear confrontation. This means that one of the two superpowers realizes that peace is related to justice and ending the expansionist Zionist plan. The path and mechanism of peace become clear if the other side comes to understand this. Through his deep and comprehensive insight, President Hafiz al-Asad spoke the the truth when he stressed that the continuous U.S. support for Israel is the main obstacle to any just solution based on the withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories and on Palestinian rights. Until this support ends, the situation will remain tense and fraught with dangerous possibilities.

Radio Warns of More Palestinian Army Operations

JN0803094089 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Palestine Broadcast: "Spotlight"]

[Text] Unable to explain to Zionist settlers why it cannot locate the Israeli soldier Avi Sasportas, who was detained by the forces of the Palestinian Popular Army, the iron fist of the popular intifadah [uprising], while on his way from Ashdod to Ashqelon, the Zionist enemy leadership is now trying to say, through statements over its radio, that this army is an unknown organization.

True, elements of this army are unknown to Mosad and Shin Bet, but its name is not new to the Zionist leaders and their services. They were surprised by this name one night in 1974, when a group of fighters attacked the (Karni) fruit canning plant in Gaza, detained its guards, tied them up and burned down the whole plant. The enemy estimated its losses at 6 million pounds. The group left a note saying: The Palestinian Popular Liberation Army passed by this place. Such incidents have recurred hundreds of times in the West Bank and Gaza during 15 years of continuous struggle in which the heroes of this army confined their missions to chasing the enemy. They continued to be a mystery because they believed right from the beginning that absolute secrecy is the way to succeed in a long hard struggle such as our people's battle with the Zioonist enemy.

By kidnapping the Israeli soldier Avi Sasportas, demanding the release of 1500 Arab detainees in exchange for this Israeli soldier, and showing a video recording of the assassination of leader martyr Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir], the Palestinian Popular Army presented the world with fresh proof that our people, who are determined to obtain their rights by force and restore the Arab nature of their homeland, have the military ability to deal two blows for every enemy blow.

In addition to defying the enemy by detaining one of its soliders, the fighters of the Palestinian Popular Army could have destroyed houses over the heads of their Jewish settler occupants, or blown up buses with their civilian passengers. They can still do that, and they may be forced to do it, if the enemy continues its crimes. The task of the fighters who are defending the freedom of our people is to protect our people from death by teaching the enemy the bitter lesson that its crimes will not pass unpunished.

Afghanistan

Kabul-Mujahidin Battle for Jalalabad Updated

Government Holding Positions

LD1603104489 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0445 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul, March 15, BAKHTAR—The Afghan Government troops defending Jalalabad in Nangarhar Province in the past 24 hours, continued to hold their positions and repel rebel attacks in the directions of Hadda and Chaprahar. The enemy suffered heavy casualties in men and materials in this operation.

Over the past 24 hours, the enemy fired from different directions over 7,000 shells, mines and missiles and other types of heavy weapons on the Jalalabad city and its outlying areas. As a result, four servicemen of the Armed Forces were killed and thirty seven injured. Similarly, six civilians including three children and one women were killed and sixteen injured. A cache of ammunitions of the army corps no. 1, four houses, one mosque and a part of a civilian surgical hospital were either destroyed or partially damaged.

The invasion of the enemy forces from the direction of Shiveh in northeastern part of Jalalabad city was also pushed back. Under the blows of the Armed Forces, 480 Pakistani invaders and extemists were killed and over 150 injured. Two enemy commanders, namely Mawlawi from Khalis band and another named Yar Muhammad from Sayyaf group were also among the killed ones. Similarly, other commanders namely Engineer Ahmad Shah and other were severely injured.

Destroyed were also two armoured personnel carriers, four trucks, five missile launchers, four recoilless guns, seven mortars, 18 firing positions and three command posts.

Pakistani advisers seek to strengthen rebels' morale which has considerably sunk, according to reconnaisssance reports from the enemy's rear. This has made the Pakistani advisers and commanders to intensify artillery and rocket attacks on Jalalabad city. The servicemen of the Armed Forces and the local residents possesses a high morale and have the situation under the control.

4,500 Rebels' 'Total Losses'

LD1603220789 Moscow TASS in English 2143 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul March 16 TASS—There is a tense situation around Jalalabad, the centre of the Nangarhar Province. It is being subjected to constant attacks by armed units of the irreconcilable opposition backed by the Pakistani military. The government forces hold positions around the city and rebuff rebels' raids within a radius of 10 to 15 kilometres from the outskirts of the city. The attacking forces are sustaining heavy casualties. Within the past 24 hours as many as 456 officers and men were killed, 117 were wounded. Eleven mujahids were taken prisoner. A number of them crossed over to the side of government forces. As many as 19 enemy vehicles, six rocket launchers, a large number of cannons and mortars and four command posts were destroyed by bombing and shelling. A caravan with armaments and ammunition was liquidated.

Rocket attacks and shelling of Jalalabad continue, though not as intensive as before. The city's residential areas and mosques are being damaged and destroyed by explosions. There are also civilian casualties, which include women and children.

The Pakistani military assumed the task of supplying reinforcements and ammunition to rebels and are urging them to continue the offensive against the province's administrative centre. According to reports reaching Kabul, the Pakistani military authorities are obstructing the pullback of rebel units from Jalalabad. These units sustained heavy losses in battles against government forces. To prevent retreat, the Pakistani authorities use the 18th infantry division of Pakistan's land forces from whose positions Jalalabad is heavily shelled.

Lieutenant General 'Abdul Haq Ulumi, secretary of Afghanistan's Supreme Defense Council, told a briefing on Thursday that the rebels' total losses from the time they launched the offensive ten days ago reached 4.5 thousand. Over two thousand rebels were wounded. The Afghan Army is in full control of the situation around the city.

Over the past two days the situation around Herat and in the province of the same name has worsened. According to intelligence reports received by the Afghan Army, the rebels' leaders in this area drew up a plan for simultaneously attacking the province's administrative centre, as well as the city of Shindand with its Air Force base and Shindand-Towr Ghondi road. The extremists tried to carry out that plan on March 14 when they launched a rocket attack weapons and mortar fire on Army posts and residential areas. As many as 150 rockets rained down on Herat. As many as 27 residents, including women and children, died. Actions by units of the Afghan Armed Forces frustrated the rebels' attempts to launch an offensive and forced them to retreat. Operations to neutralize armed opposition units and their bases are being conducted in Herat Province.

Rebels Launch 'Major Offensive'

BK1603155589 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] According to reports from Afghanistan, the mujahidin have captured an important Kabul regime position at Jalalabad airport. The mujahidin killed six Kabul regime soldiers, damaged two tanks and two armored cars and seized a large quantity of arms and ammunition. Observers report that the Kabul administration's defense around the airport has been weakened due to the fall of this important position. The airport has remained closed for the past several days.

The Kabul administration says the mujahidin have captured the eastern garrison of Jalalabad city and places in the nearby military base, which it called unimportant in military terms. The mujahidin say they have now launched a major offensive from the eastern front of the airport and have crossed barbed wires. They have described it as a major success.

Reports have also come in on the mujahidin's successful operations in other provinces. In Qandahar, the mujahidin inflicted heavy casualties on the Kabul administration's forces in (Cheharuzina) and Dand areas. In Faryab Province, the mujahidin killed 18 Kabul administration soldiers after damaging armored cars in Maymaneh. Fierce fighting continues in Baghlan and Parvan provinces.

Rebels Near Airport Terminal

BK1703024489 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] In Afghanistan, a fierce battle is raging in and around Jalalabad with mujahidin launching attacks from various fronts to capture the city. Yesterday, the mujahidin made further advances toward the Jalalabad airport terminal. Some Western media reports stated that the battle for Jalalabad is a battle for Kabul. They say that the mujahidin's control on Jalalabad will increase pressure on Kabul which will help the mujahidin capture the Afghan capital.

Army Chief of Staff Directing Jalalabad Defense

BK1603151089 Hong Kong AFP in English 1445 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul, March 16 (AFP)—Afghan Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Asef Delawar has gone to Jalalabad to take control of government forces in the battle for the strategic eastern city, a government spokesman said Thursday [16 March]. "Yes, he has gone to Jalalabad," said General 'Abdul Haq 'Ulomi, secretary for the government's Council for Defence of the Homeland, when asked if Gen. Asef Delawar had gone there five days ago to supervise the defence of the city. Gen. 'Ulomi also told reporters here the Army was prepared "not only for a second offensive, but a third and a fourth and any others" on Jalalabad, where two Army generals have died since the rebels launched a big offensive March 5. Hundreds of people have been killed in the battle for the city.

Recent Military Operations in Provinces, Kabul

LD1603190589 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] An authorized source from the Afghan Armed Forces reports that the units and companies of the Armed Forces in Nangarhar repulsed a joint enemy attack on Jalalabad airport. Security forces deflected an enemy attack from another direction which was assisted by regular units of the Pakistani Army and militia. In some areas the Armed Forces have pushed the extremists and their Pakistani collaborators back and have inflicted heavy blows on their strongholds, depots, and gathering places.

The report adds that during the past 24 hours the enemy, from the rear of the front lines, fired several thousand rounds of artillery and rocket missiles. They fired other heavy weapons with the direct cooperation of the Pakistani Army and militia under the instruction of Pakistani advisers and advisers from a number of other countries, on the residential areas of Jalalabad city and on security posts. The extremists, under the protection of Pakistani militarists, directed their operations at the eastern and northeastern parts of the airport and met with stiff resistance and severe blows from the units and companies stationed in those areas.

The militant forces stationed there have resolutely defended their positions while the extremists and the Pakistani militia have abandoned their positions as a result of intensive heavy weapons fire. During the operations, two soldiers were martyred and four officers were wounded; also four civilians, including two children were martyred and eight others, including women and small children, were wounded. Four residential homes, one Mosque, two private cars and one truck belonging to Army Corps No 1 were set on fire.

According to reliable reports, the units and companies belonging to Pakistani Artillery Division No 18, wearing local clothing, are at the rear of the frontline. The supply of weapons and ammunition and other equipment to the enemy front is continuing thanks to resources from the Pakistani Armed Forces. The source adds that the units and companies in Nangarhar Province repulsed an enemy offensive from the direction of Chaprahar and east of the airport and killed 475 extremists under the protection of the Pakistani military authorities and troops from the Pakistani militia.

(?Fawad) and Abdullah from the Gulbuddin extremist group; Abdullah Khan from the Kahlis extremist group and also (Ajab Khan), (Nanmuddin) and (Mawlawi), three other extremist ringleaders, are among those killed. Some 11 of the enemy have been captured and a number of them have joined the Afghan Armed Forces. A large quantity of weapons and ammunition belonging to them have been seized by the security forces. One supply convoy belonging to the war-mongerers including 18 trucks and another supply convoy including 32 horses and a mule along with their loads were destroyed. Also, surface-to-surface missiles, 4 mortars, 35 light rocket launchers, 250 light weapons, 4 communication units, 3 command places, 3 gathering places, 20 guns and 28 enemy strongholds were destroyed.

According to other reports, units and companies of our Armed Forces carried out moppiong-up and retaliatory operations in some areas and inflicted shattering blows on extremist armed groups under Pakistani protection who were disrupting the security of local people. As a result of operations by security forces stationed in Qandahar Province, 16 armed extremists were killed and 6 were wounded. Among those killed were two foreign advisers. During the operation, one member of the security forces was martyred and three were wounded. Five strongholds, two dugouts, two mortars, and two missiles belonging to the extremists were destroyed; more than 40 mortars and recoilless guns were seized by the security forces.

Another report states that groups linked to Pakistani militarist circles fired heavy weapons on some parts of Herat Province's residential areas and security posts, and disrupted the peace of the local people. They faced retaliatory responses from the units and companies of the security forces in Herat Province. during the operations 43 extremists were killed and 31 were wounded. Three commanders from the Jamiyat group namely (Wakil Ahmad), (Husayn Shah), and ('Abdul Qader) were also among those killed. Three strongholds, two mortars, and one missile were destroyed.

An Armed Forces source added that as a result of a clash which took place between the security forces and the extremists in parts of Sar-e Pol District, eight armed warmongerers were killed. One rocket launcher, three Kalashnikov rifles, along with a large quantity of ammunition, were seized by the security forces.

Another report says that as a result of heavy weapons fire by extremist groups linked with Pakistani militarists in Khowst city, JaJi Meydan, Lakan, Tani, and Gorbaz, six people were wounded.

A separate report adds that severe clashes, emanating from deep hostility between the commanders of the extremist groups about the creation of the Rawalpindi government, have taken place in various parts of the country. As a result of a bloody clash which took place recently between individuals belonging to the Gulbuddin and Rabbani extremist groups in parts of Rostaq District, Takhar Province—(Mullah Nadir) known as (Saburiyar), a notorious commander from the Gulboddin extremist group was killed. Similar clashes have also taken place between the aforementioned groups in (Farza) region as a result of which 10 people from the Rabbani extremist group and 3 from the Gulbuddin extremist group were killed. (Habib Jan), a ringleader from the Gulbuddin extremist group, was captured by the rival group.

6 Missiles Fired on Kabul

LD1603174189 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Excerpt] The criminal extremists, protected by Pakistan, who deny peace to our compatriots, have perpetrated another shocking and unforgivable crime today. They fired six surface-to-surface missiles on residential regions of the sixth ward of Kabul city. The BIA military section reports that these rockets hit the second and third sections of the new Khayr-Khanah Maynah project. As a result of this inhumane and anti-Islamic action by the criminal extremists, 10 compatriots, including 3 children, were martyred, and 5 were wounded. The wounded were taken to the hospital quickly and treated. [passage omitted]

1,500 Kabul Troops Defect to Rebels in Herat

LD1603140489 Tehran IRNA in English 1355 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Mashhad, March 16, IRNA—Two pro-government Afghan militia commanders along with 1,500 forces under their command defected to Afghan mujahidin at Ghurian region in Herat Wednesday. Informed sources close to the mujahidin told IRNA that the defectors also handed in a large amount of ammunition and weapons including rocket launchers, automatic rifles, machine guns, six vehicles and one million rounds of bullets. The deserters were in charge of controlling roads connecting Ghurian to the central parts of Afghanistan.

2 Pakistani 'Intelligence' Officers Arrested

LD1603191589 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] As our dear compatriots and the world public know, in violating the Geneva accords so crudely and shamefully the Pakistan Government is continuing its aggression and interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs to the extent that Pakistani commandos, military intelligence officers, and militia forces are taking actual part in attacks on Afghanistan's cities. The Afghan Armed Forces are defending with devotion and pride their ancestor's land and they are inflicting crushing blows on the interventionists and their mercenaries. During these operations two officers belonging to Pakistan's Punjab Province military intelligence, who took an active part in recent operation, were arrested and are now under investigation. Details of their admissions will be broadcast to the public and journalists will have an opportunity to question them closely.

Najibullah Interviewed on Security Issues

LD1703094389 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0439 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul, March 16, BAKHTAR—The policy of the national reconciliation is a continuing and perspective process. The proclamation of the state of emergency was an inevitable but temporary act which has been adopted as a result of foreign threat, said President Najibullah replying to a question of Zahir Tanin, a correspondent of AKHBAR-E HAFTA [WEEKLY NEWS] weekly.

Therefore the proclamation of the state of emergency does not mean the end of the policy of national reconciliation. Its aim, President Najibullah continued, is to prevent conspiracies and saboteurs against the national reconciliation and its achievements. The inclusion of few ministers in the cabinet does not mean that the opportunity for work and privileges has been taken away from non-party members and the power is monopolised by the party. The fact is that at this difficult and extraordinary phase of our life the assignment of ministerial posts to party members is not a privilege but is putting heavier responsibilities on their shoulders.

The PDPA will not deviate from its commitment for division of power and participation of other forces in it at organisational or individual levels. At any rate the passage to the state of emergency has a passing character and is temporary. The nature of our next measures will be linked with the development of events in our country.

President Najibullah added that if the extremist opposition does not stop subversive and warmongering policy and Pakistan does not refrain from her armed interference and intervention it would be our natural and legal right to make use of every possibility in preserving the national interests and security of our country. The main enemy of the policy of national reconciliation is the extremist warmongering opposition who does not pay the slightest attention to the national interests of Afghanistan. They follow the political aims of the aliens, said President Najibullah replying to another question.

Touching on the intention of Pakistan to merge Afghanistan to Pakistan, President Najibullah said there is no doubt that the military intelligence department of Pakistan is willing to implement and put into practice their expansionist plots through the so-called interim government. The design of Pakistan-Afghanistan confederation which is fanned up by some Pakistani circles in these days poses the danger of disintegrating the country.

But for sure the people of Afghanistan would not permit by any means the enemies of the country to achieve this end. Our brave and valorous people will defend the unity and territorial integrity of their united, independent and proud Afghanistan.

Najibullah Promotes Colonels in Nangarhar Battle

LD1603185489 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] On the basis of a decree issued by esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan, the Order of the April Revolution award was approved for Major General 'Abdul Ghafur, son of Muhammad Sediq, for his commendable services in safeguarding national sovereignty and repulsing foreign aggression.

The presidential office reported that on the basis of separate decrees issued by esteemed Najibullah, the following Armed Forces officers stationed in Nangarhar Province have been promoted to the rank of brigadier general as a reward for their display of merit and their heroism in repulsing foreign aggression against the sanctity of our free and proud homeland:
Colonel Dad Muhammad, son of Juma Gul,
Col Obayyed Gul, son of 'Abdul Manan,
Col Nurul Haq, son of Serajul Haq
Col Asadullah, son of Habibullah,
Col 'Abdul Wasi, son of Abdullah,
Col Muhammad Ebrahim, son of Muhammad Esma'il,
Col Nur Salam, son of Bahram,
Col Haybat, son of Babrak
Col Sardar, son of Muhammad Akbar,
Col Muhammad Sharif, son of Janat Gul,
Col Muhammad Esma'il, son of Sayued Muhammad Hakim,
Col Sher Muhammad, son of Talib,
Col Muhammad 'Umar, son of Muhammad 'Azim.

An Armed Forces source reports that esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan, also approved extraorinary promotion cards, medals, and badges of the Republic of Afghanistan for other members of the Armed Forces stationed in Nangarhar Province.

Esteemed Najibullah commended 53 radio and television employees who displayed merit and worthiness in the execution of their jobs by presenting gifts to them. They were presented today at a ceremony by Ahmad Bashir Roygar, minister of information and culture.

Rabbani Notes 'Vacuum' in Interim Government

LD1503211789 Tehran IRNA in English 1754 GMT 15 Mar 89

[text] Islamabad, March 15, IRNA—The absence of the Iran-based coalition in the interim government has created "a great vacuum", admitted a top leader of the 7-party Pashto alliance today, and hoped that the wrong would be redressed by giving Shi'ite groups a fair share.

Burhanuddin Rabbani, leader of the Pakistan based Jamiyat-e Eslami, added that the inclusion of the said eight groups is vital for the transitional government. In what was seen as an anti-climax to a decade of heroic struggle, last February, some major Pashto parties hastily announced an interim government, ignoring the rights of other major groups such as the Hazaras, Uzbeks, Tajiks, Turkmens and the urbanised Kizilbash.

Between 35-40 percent of Afghans follow the Ja'fari school of jurisprudence, and Iran had time and again cautioned the mujahidin against letting enemies exploit racial and sectarian differences.

Burhanuddin stressed that nothing can tarnish the mujahidin's relations with their two neighbours Iran and Pakistan, which he said are based on Islamic brotherhood.

Mujahidin 7-Party, 8-Party Alliances To Meet

NC1603224089 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 13 Mar 89 pp 1, 6

[Text] Tehran—The next Afghan mujahidin meeting will be between the eight-party coalition and the seven-party alliance and not between the interim government and the eight-party coalition as some reports have hinted, a mujahidin leader says.

Talking to the TEHRAN TIMES recently, Muhammad Karim Khalili, head of the Iran-based eight-party alliance, said he had convinced Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, the leader of the seven-party alliance, on the matter. "A delegation will soon be dispatched to Pakistan," he noted, adding that a high-powered delegation might also be sent to Tehran by the Pakistan-based groups.

"We believe the interim government does not enjoy the necessary legal footing it needs to have as it was formed by a shura (council) that does not represent all the mujahidin. Of course, we, on our part, are very much for unity with the seven-party alliance," Khalili said.

Asked whether the eight Iran-based groups were seeking a coalition with parties left out of the seven-party alliance and the shura, Khalili denied the reports. Nevertheless, he confirmed, "We do have certain common interests with these groups. We are particularly one with them on the position-takings of the shura."

On the imminent fall of Herat, the seat of the Afghan Shi'ites and a strategic city, west of the country, Khalili said, "We are thinking of liberating Herat and Kabul in particular. But we will not go ahead with our plans without first harmonizing with other combatant forces. We strongly believe that any move that might lead to rifts and divisiveness should be avoided."

India

Buta Singh Says 'Terrorists' Trained in Pakistan

BK1603131589 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] The Rajya Sabha was told today that according to the information available with the government, a number of terrorists have received training in Pakistan. The home minister, Mr Buta Singh, said during question time that it is, however, not possible to estimate the total number of terrorists who have received training in training centers in Pakistan.

12 'Terrorists' Arrested in Punjab; 4 Killed

BK1603145589 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] The Cabinet Subcommittee on Punjab headed by the external affairs minister, Mr Narasimha Rao, today reviewed the implementation of the package of measures announced by the prime minister. The committee is also expected to hold a dialogue shortly with the opposition parties in the state.

Meanwhile, security forces have arrested 12 terrorists during raids at different places in the state since yesterday. Terrorists shot dead four persons in Amritsar District.

Assam 'Extremists' Kill 2, Injure 7 Policemen

BK1603150789 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Reports from Guwahati say Bodo extremists ambushed two police patrol parties in Kokrajhar District of Assam today killing a CRPF [Central Reserve Police Force] jawan [soldier] and injuring seven policemen.

In another incident the extremists hurled a bomb at a patrol party at Esuwagaon injuring seven police personnel.

The Oil and Natural Gas Commission's operations in Sibsagar District of the state also continued to be affected for the third day today following the 96 hour oil blockade sponsored by the Sibsagar District Students Union.

PRC Offer To Talk With Dalai Lama Assessed

BK1603115589 Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Sunil Roy commentary: "China Offers Talks With Dalai Lama"]

[Text] Beijing's moderate wind of change is no longer blowing that gently in Lhasa. The roof of the world has once again been rocked by protest marches, mass arrests, and violence. It is anybody's guess how many Tibetans actually lost their lives in the hands of the Chinese Army and police, since there is no way to independent corroboration.

This is the third time in less than 18 months the Tibetans asserted their right to autonomy. They took advantage of China's National Day in October 1987 to highlight their grievance for the first time. The current spate of violence that broke out 10 days ago coincided with Tibet's first revolt against the Han Chinese in March 1959. The abortive revolt led to the Dalai Lama's flight to India along with a large number of his followers. Since then they took refuge in India.

The Dalai Lama has maintained that he is prepared to return to Tibet if convinced that the Tibetans were happy under the Chinese rule. Toward this end, he sent several missions to Tibet and Beijing in the past 9 years. The first mission visited Lhasa in July 1980. The Chinese position on the return of the Dalai Lama to the land of his origin is that he is welcome either for a short visit or return permanently any time of his choice.

In the past few years there was no concrete movement forward and the attitude of the exiled Tibetans hardened to the extent of demanding independence from the Chinese mainland. Since the liberation of China in 1949, Tibet was declared an autonomous region. Within a few days of protests in Lhasa in October 1987, the Dalai

Lama called for civil disobedience in Tibet to get rid of Chinese rule. He, however, acknowledged that Tibetans have links with the mainland China, which he would not like to be snapped.

This time the Dalai Lama reacted more coolly. He expressed the hope that the Chinese would see the wisdom of resolving the issue peacefully through negotiations. The final decision would have to be taken by Tibetans themselves, he added. The Dalai Lama took one more step. He urged the top Chinese leader, Deng Xiaoping, to intercede personally to reach an amicable solution. Within 4 days of the Dalai Lama's plea for Mr Deng's intervention, the Chinese leadership offered to hold talks on the future of Tibet with the exiled god-king. The proposed meeting can take place anywhere in the world, in any Chinese diplomatic compound. It was made clear in the Chinese offer that Tibet's independence is not negotiable.

The venue for talks has been a recurrent topic of dispute. In January this year, the Dalai Lama had proposed Geneva. The Chinese insisted that the talks could only be held in Beijing or in any diplomatic mission of China abroad.

From the renewed offer to hold talks with the Dalai Lama, it is apparent that the Chinese had taken note of the world criticism of its handling of last week's Tibetan protest in Lhasa. The first thing the Chinese did was to order all foreign journalists and tourists out from Lhasa after promulgating martial law. The implications are clear. In the recent disturbances an unspecified number of Tibetans have been killed, wounded, or arrested.

India has reasons to feel concerned over developments in Tibet. Only 3 months ago, the Indian prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, made his official visit to China during which he reiterated India's policy to recognize Tibet as an autonomous region of China. This position had remained unaltered since the signing of a document in 1954. India also stands committed to improve its relations with China.

Every time the voice of dissent has been expressed in Tibet, China raised an accusing finger at U.S. congressmen or the Dalai Lama clique, as China calls it. China totally ignored the fact of deprivation and alienation of Tibetans from the land of their birth. In the name of autonomy, the Tibetans were being governed more by the Han Chinese. They felt their way of life was being tampered with by outsiders.

As a way out the Dalai Lama had proposed that Tibet be made a self-governing political entity in association with China. The mainland Chinese authorities in Beijing could remain responsible for Tibet's foreign policy. But the government of Tibet should develop and maintain relations in the fields of religion, education, culture, and other nonpolitical activities. One of the criticisms against the Chinese is that the mode of education in Tibet has been changed to the detriment of local Tibetans. Under the Dalai Lama's proposal, the government of Tibet would have a right to decide on all affairs relating to Tibetans. The Chinese had not given a clear cut response to this proposal. China's decade-old open door policy would be jeopardized if Beijing continued with its denial of human rights in Tibet. It is for the Chinese leaders to grasp this reality in their own interest.

Editorial Reviews Bhutto Policy Toward Army

BK1103051789 Delhi PATRIOT in English 28 Feb 89 p 4

[Editorial: "Benazir Assails Ziaul Haq Base"]

[Text] As part of Pakistan Premier Benazir Bhutto's efforts to create an alternative political structure in Pakistan, the roles of and relationship between the President and the Prime Minister, between the Centre and provinces and, more significantly, the civilian and military authorities are in the process of being redefined. Ms Bhuttto's decision to retire 40 senior Army officers and to clip the wings of powerful Inter-Service Intelligence Directorate is a shrewd move towards de-Ziaisation in Pakistan and more particularly depoliticisation of the Army. Hemmed in by a strong Opposition and the watchful eyes of the military establishment, Ms Bhutto has so far cautiously but firmly asserted her position, thereby giving the impression that she intends to steer her own course. She is quite aware that it is difficult for her Government to survive without the criticial backing of the armed forces. Even the Pakistan People's Party election manifesto talked of strengthening the defence forces and their modernisation. Ms Bhutto may be banking on the premise that, once she consolidates her hold on power, she will be able to deal with the Army on her own terms. Given her background and that of her party, she is quite capable of employing populism later to her own advantage and to the disadvantage of the Army. In deciding to retire the senior Army officers who had in any case reached the retirement age, Ms Bhutto has sought to convey the message that she wants to evolve a tolerable equilibrium with the Army and feel her way forward in an administration entrenched with military appointees. She thus appears to have played her cards intelligently. In Pakistan where the military has ruled for 28 out of 41 years, everything so far has happened according to the rulebook. Whenever aberrations of the rule occurred, the rulebook was amended suitably to give legitimacy to the new rules. Ms Bhutto is probably aware of this and yet she wants to change the rule without letting it appear to have been changed. Certain lines of tension are clearly already shaping up between the civilian rulers and the military. A power struggle had been developing between Ms Bhutto and the military intelligence, particularly over the strategy to be evolved on Afghanistan. As reported by London's Financial Times early this month, tensions were growing between the Prime Minister and Gen Hamid Gul, head of the Inter-Service Intelligence Directorate. Gen Gul formed part of the powerful Afghan cell. The Directorate had gained over the years an unsavoury reputation under Gen Ziaul Haq for independent operations, neither sanctioned by nor accountable to the President or his Cabinet. Now that Ms Bhutto has curtailed the activities of the directorate, does it mean a shift in Pakistan's Afghan policy? Ms Bhutto's authority is limited by the legacy Gen Ziaul Haq has left the country. President Ishaq Khan and Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan are vivid symbols of the Ziaul Haq legacy. In fact, it is the existence of two centres of power as also the existence of virtually two Constitutions—the 1973 statue framed by Z.A. Bhutto and the Ziaul Haq-dictated document of 1985—that may make de-Zia-isation a rather difficult task. Gen Mirza Aslam Beg, the Army chief, says that the force has no lust for power and that it would keep out of politics. The military's proclivity to meddle in politics is far too known. Moreover, Gen Beg is the first non-Punjabi, non-Pathan chief of the Army, whose hold on the officer corps, dominated by Punjabis, remains to be demonstrated, Those who wish democracy in Pakistan well can only hope that Ms Bhutto's move, at once calculated and courageous, will lead towards the establishment of the supremacy of the civilian authority in that country.

Commentary on Success of Afghan Minister's Visit

BK0903111089 Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 9 Mar 89

[Commentary by AIR (Air India Radio) special correspondent John Churchill: "Afghan Foreign Minister's Visit"]

[Text] War settles nothing. It, in fact, unsettles everything, including the victor and the vanquished. It only leaves chaos and confusion. The present situation in Afghanistan is in no way different. Having faced a decade-long military intervention, the country's state of affairs are far from normal. The world at large is watching the developments in Afghanistan with keen interest and concern. Dr Najibullah's government acquired enough of bedsores and is now facing an uphill task in establishing peace and stability. Dr Najib is not leaving any stone unturned to restore tranquillity in his country.

The Afghan Foreign Minister Mr 'Abdul Wakil's latest visit to New Delhi was one such move. Understandably, Mr Wakil was the most sought-after leader by both Indian and foreign newsmen in Delhi. The newsmen finally got him and the occasion was a news conference on Monday. As expected, it was a crowded press conference and journalists—both Indian and foreign—asked several thought-provoking as well as embarassing questions on the state of affairs inside Afghanistan.

Mr Wakil made it clear, in his opening remarks, that his Delhi visit was for the purpose of meeting the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, and the external affairs minister, Mr Narasimha Rao, not only to appraise them of the developments, but also to seek India's mediation in finding a peaceful settlement for the Afghan problem. He said he had extensive discussions with Indian leaders who were sympathetic toward Afghanistan, right from the beginning, and contributed significantly toward a peaceful settlement of the Afghanistan problem. Mr Wakil said Afghanistan has requested for Indian economic and humanitarian assistance. The Indian leaders responded positively and the modalities of extending technical, economic, and humanitarian assistance are being worked out.

Western media men asked the Afghan minister whether Indian assistance at this stage will be appropriate when it is engaged in the mediation with other involved countries, like Pakistan. Surprisingly, what the Western media men overlooked was the fact that India is mediating with a sincere hope of bringing peace and tranquillity to Afghanistan and to the Asia region. In the entire Afghan problem, India is the only country which does not have any stakes except peace and prosperity for the Afghan people.

One will be able to understand India's role better if one looks at the background of the Afghan problem. The withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan led to numerous problems. First, it was faction-ridden fighting between the 200,000 odd rebels who have been fighting the security forces. The world at large thought that there will be a peaceful settlement between the present government and the representatives of the rebels. The shura or the council, which was held for the first time since 1842, raised hopes of a settlement. But they soon disappeared into thin air as the mujahidin were a divided lot. They are mainly divided into two factions. One is the seven-party Peshawar-based alliance known as the Peshawar-7 and the other is the Tehran-based eight groups called Tehran-8. The Peshawar-7 have the support of Pakistan which all along proclaimed that its goals were withdrawal of the Soviet troops and the return of Afghan refugee from Pakistan.

It is in this background that India's mediation has to be looked at. While all the involved countries wanted a solution that favored their interest, India did not entertain any such things, as efforts to bring a peaceful settlement to the problem were mainly out of consideration for peace and prosperity of the region. This has been appreciated by Afghanistan and its foreign minister and they wanted India to persuade Pakistan to abide by the Geneva accord. Mr Wakil reiterated that only the Geneva accord offers comprehensive political settlement and all parties must abide by the accord. He told newsmen that after the Soviet troops withdrawal, the United States and Pakistan have intensified their support to the rebels. He declared that the Afghanistani troops are capable of defending the sovereignty and integrity of their country.

The Afghan foreign minister said that his government will continue to make every effort to bring a political settlement in Afghanistan. He expressed his willingness to meet the Pakistani prime minister, Ms Benazir

Bhutto, and discuss the problem with her. He said his government is in touch with the leaders of the rebel groups. Whether the efforts of the present government will be successful or not, peace in Afghanistan seems to be a far cry. Meanwhile, the Afghan foreign minister, Mr Wakil, can at least have satisfaction that his mission to New Delhi has been successful.

Opposition Boycotts Rajya Sabha Session 2 Days

BK1703041089 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Excerpts] The Rajya Sabha chairman, Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma, today ruled that the opposition notice for call attention motion on the Thakkar Commission report [on assassination of Mrs Indira Gandhi] cannot be admitted. He said he was giving this ruling after considering all aspects of the matter, including the human aspect and unquestionable norms of fair play and justice. Dr Sharma assured the agitated opposition members that he has given the fullest attention to the matter and also ascertained the government's viewpoint. When asked by the opposition members the reasons for the rejection, Dr Sharma said under the rules he is not obliged to give these. But, he said, he is satisfied that the calling attention motion is not admissible on very valid and noteworthy grounds. When an opposition member asked the chairman whether the government has given the information required by him, Dr Sharma said he has never been coerced by the government. The decision is entirely his own. Dr Sharma said he is putting all this on record because posterity will judge him for his decision. [passage omitted]

The Janata Party member, Mr M.S. Gurupadaswamy, said the opposition was dissatisfied with the chairman's ruling and they are boycotting the proceedings of the house for today and tomorrow. At this, the entire opposition, barring the National Conference, walked out.

Later, leaders of 11 political parties and groups in the Rajya Sabha, in a joint statement, criticized the government for refusing to place the report on the table of the house and obstructing the matter being taken up for discussion. The statement says that in doing so the government has ignored the fact that the report is already with the public and has set in motion all kinds of speculations which should be laid to rest in the interest of the government itself.

Referring to the suspension of the opposition members from the Lok Sabha, the statement says this will cause immense harm to our parliamentary system. The signatories to the statement belong to Janata, Communist Party of India [CPI]-Marxist, CPI, Telugu Desam, BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party], All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazagham, Dravidra Munnetra Kazagham, Asom Gana Parishad, Akali Dal, Forward Bloc, and Revolutionary Socialist Party.

Official Spokesman Clarifies Dhawan Position

BK1703130889 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] An official spokesman said in New Delhi today that the Home Ministry had found after checking with the special investigation team that Mr R.K. Dhawan was not in any way involved either in the crime or the conspiracy leading to the assassination of Indira Gandhi. He gave the clarification in connection with the home minister, Mr Buta Singh's statement in Parliament on the 14th and 15th during the proceedings regarding a news item on the Thakkar Commission report.

The spokesman said that the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet had taken the precaution of getting this information before clearing Mr Dhawan's appointment in the Cabinet Secretariat.

Police Sieze Large Consignment of Narcotics

BK1603091689 Hong Kong AFP in English 0856 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] New Delhi, March 16 (AFP)—Police siezed 1.14 tonnes of narcotics here, the biggest so far this year, a night before it was to be smuggled out to Western Europe by an Afghan, police said Thursday. Police and federal narcotics agents intercepted a lorry carrying charas, a less refined form of hashish derived from poppies [as received], worth 7.3 million dollars late Wednesday and arrested five alleged drug peddlers, police said. The consignment was to be handed over Thursday to an Afghan national for sale in Western Europe, police said. Search for the Afghan, belonging to the refugee community here, was continuing.

Iran

Kashani Delivers Friday Prayers Sermons

LD1703112289 Tehran IRNA in English 1118 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 17, IRNA—A senior Iranian official Friday said the declaration of Islamic states against "The Satanic Verses" was what all Muslims wanted and called on Muslim governments to carry out its points.

"What they did was what everyone expected," said Ayatollah Mohammad Emami Kashani, in the first high-level reaction inside Iran to the Organization of the Islamic Conference stand on the issue. "Now it is expected that they take action."

Kashani, spokesman for the Council of Guardians which oversees parliamentary legislation, was speaking as congregational leader of this week's Friday mass prayer in Tehran.

The 46-member OIC meeting in the Saudi capital Riyadh, in a separate declaration Thursday accepted Iran's demand to label Salman Rushdie an apostate which according to Islamic Law is punishable by death.

"The conference strongly condemns the blasphemous publication 'The Satanic Verses' whose author is regarded as an apostate and appeals to all members of the international community to ban the book," the declaration stated.

It also called on publishing houses to withdraw the book and urged member states to boycott any that did not comply, called on the world community to pass laws protecting religious beliefs, and declared all members would exert efforts to ensure respect for Islam in the world. "We hope the members of the conference will pay attention to the points presented (in the declaration) and turn them into action," Kashani said.

His remarks followed those of Iran's chief delegate at the conference Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad 'Ali Taskhiri who described the declaration as "historic" and the most important ever issued by the organization.

The conflict between the West and the Islamic world, which has left at least 20 people martyred in demonstrations in India and Pakistan and led to Iran cutting off ties with Britain, was initially to be discussed in the OIC's Cultural Committee.

But Iran's request that the issue be moved to the Political Committee was accepted and the term apostate for the Indian-born British author, born into a Muslim family, included in the declaration. Imam Khomeyni last month declared Rushdie an apostate and ordered he be killed according to Islamic law.

Kashani said the reading of "The Satanic Verses" would be a sin for the general public but called on leaders and experts of Islamic countries to study it to understand the imam's fatwa.

"I urge all leaders, officials and parliamentarians of Islamic countries to read this book and see why the position taken by... the imam is not just according to Islamic law but a just one." He added: "I believe if any Muslim, who is not concerned with praying and fasting but believes in Prophet (Muhammad) as a prophet, reads this book, his blood will boil. This issue is not a joke."

The ayatollah also criticized those Muslims who said Rushdie had a right to a proper trial and that the imam's fatwa had given prominence to anti-Islamic literature.

Kashani argued that Rushdie's sacrilege was so gross and obvious that as in documented cases of early Islam, a trial would not be necessary. The prophet himself, peace be upon him, had ordered the execution without trial of those who lampooned him.

But Kashani said if "The Satanic Verses" had not been extensively publicized and Muslims had not lost their lives to oppose it, the leader of the Islamic Republic would not have taken such a stand.

"Falsehood has been publicized, prizes were given and newspapers published it. That's when (the imam) issued God's verdict—the exact verdict of God accepted by everyone in Islam."

Khamene'i Meets With Qom Theologians

LD1603142789 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0933 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Responses made by President Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i at a meeting with scholars and clergymen of Qom Seminary; questions read by Khamene'i; date and place not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Today, I am glad to be in this mosque at this large gathering of our dear scholars and 'ulema. We have the opportunity to take part in this program [as heard] as long as my situation and yours permits. Whatever issues are not covered, life permitting, I will be at your service on another day and in another program. We will continue, God willing, for as long as we can. That is the main point. Now, to the questions. [passage omitted]

Question: Today, radio and television are the means of disseminating culture. Should the opportunity be given to theologians to use those resources for publicity?

If not all theologians use those resources for publicity, nevertheless, some theologians do use them. You can see, with God's grace, that theologians and the 'ulema speak on radio and television. You must not say we should expect radio and television to be given to us theologians so that we may run them and use them. I do not think that is a correct expectation. That if not the proper point of view.

You, for your part, must prepare yourselves to deliver a discourse suitable with the moment and within the horizons of the millions-strong Iranian nation; something which is worthy of being uttered by someone from the seminary, which is the mother of publicity and which is the main disseminator and harbinger of Islamic culture. You must always have such material ready. If you do not, prepare yourselves.

Some of the material delivered on radio and television by way of religious teaching is truly not of a quality suitable for radio and television which addresses millions of people. [passage omitted] Of course, it may be said that some things are presented on radio and television which are not suitable for the majority of the people, but are suitable for the knowledgeable and the scholars among the people. There is nothing wrong with that. That is good, because we must address every level; not all the radio and television audience is on the same level.

Nonetheless, what is presented along with that material for the understanding of the general public must have a strong foundation. [passage omitted]

The next question concerns the issue of foreign loans. It asks: What is the imam's opinion about this? Does the rejection of the leadership council in that connection meet with the agreement of other officials?

We have full consensus in connection with loans from foreign countries. We all consider foreign loans as very dangerous, and it is not in our interest to become involved. The reason is that when foreign debts occur and we get a loan from a foreign bank or government, we must create projects domestically which must produce enough revenue to yield the profit necessary for the correct management of the country while benefitting the people. Furthermore, it must generate enough income for the repayment of the loan, as the loan carries interest, and no one gives interest-free loans to the Islamic Republic—nor to anyone else for that matter. This source of income is not something which is easy to attain. [passage omitted]

What executive organ do we have in this country that can borrow money and use it in a project which will not only be beneficial to the country's economy, but also enable us to repay the debt? It seems unlikely that we should be able to do that. If we can not repay the debt, then they will accumulate and make the country helpless. It is not only His Excellency Grand Ayatollah Montazeri who disagrees with foreign loans; all of us are against it. Certainly, the imam does not agree it with either, although we have not talked to him specifically about this issue.

There is one thing that we, that is to say, I do not oppose. I like to express my opinion clearly. Some people may have the same opinions, but they might be reluctant to express them. I believe we should not have foreign debts, but we must accept the help of those countries who can cooperate with us in investments and making projects operational. There are other ways to do that aside from incurring loans. I say that there are other ways, and I base this statement on the opinion of our own financial and economic experts; that is, the people who are currently managing the country's economic and financial affairs. They have said we can cooperate with some countries. Of course, this does not include those countries that are bent on deceit and mischief and plan to use this weak point as an axis against us, countries like England and France, etc. Of course, we did not think France would unveil its filthy and dirty face. We do not intend to resort to England, etc. [sentence as heard] Instead we are drawn to those countries who have both a sound industrial base with a high degree of knowledge and the ability to cooperate with us. Cooperation with these countries is possible through ways other than loans.

Next question: Why do the officials act with caution and vagueness vis-a-vis our foreign policy, and why do they not they confront England and France from a position of strength, despite the firmness of his excellency the imam and the deputy leader who have likened the relation between Iran and the United States as relations between a wolf and a sheep?

This question of course refers to the situation prevailing before the issue of "Satan's Verse,"—as the book as a whole is Satan's verse, that is what I call it.

I must say that the remark is not true. In our foreign policy we adopt those positions which are in accordance with our Islamic and revolutionary codes. It would be a shame if the biggest world powers confront us from a position of strength and bully us. The foreign policy officials include us, that is, me and the heads of three powers—Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani and others—and also the Foreign Ministry. We are all among the directors of foreign policy, that is to say, that foreign policy is formulated and implemented with the consent of the members of the three powers. You must be aware of that.

Of course, there are some people who try to blame what they consider as weakness in foreign policy on someone whom they try to accuse. This is sometimes blamed on this person, sometimes on that person, sometimes me, depending on the cirumstances. This is wrong. You must be aware that the director and the implementer of foreign policy is the Foreign Ministry, but the formulators of foreign policy are the heads of the three powers and the head of the government. In meetings between the heads of the three powers, many of the issues pertaining to foreign policy are discussed and decided on through consultation. In sensitive issues we do not rely onour own opinions; we consult with the imam. Some will say that we are dragging the name of the imam into the discussion. No, we do not intend to drag him into the discussion. We have the courage to stand fast behind what we have done. But this is true: when we say we consult with the imam, we cannot say that we do not consult him.

In foreign policy and in international affairs we have not as yet tolerated bullying from anyone, and will not do so in futurer. [crowd chants support] In all fields related to the conduct of negotiations, exchange of opinions, political cooperation, establishment of relations, and the upgrading of political relations, we carefully observe the honor of the revolutionary Islamic Republic, which follows the line of our beloved imam. No one shows any complacency in that regard.

If some foreign newspaper or radio station—and also,regrettably, some uninformed friends—should write or say something, this should not form the criteria for action and judgment. Reality is what I just said. Even in my trips abroad, if I detect the slightest shortcoming, I do not accept it [as heard]. I face issues abroad in the capacity of a first-class president. I expect the reciprocity of the host country at that level, and not as a second-class president. Praise be to God, all our contacts with other countries have followed that line, and we have given the same type of reception to our guests, and we thank God for that. [passage omitted]

The next question: In connection with the historical message of the imam of the ummah to clergymen and eminent theologians, and his eminence's warning about the need for the correct recognition and position with respect to pseudo-clergymen and psuedo-devout people, why has the vital message of the leader of the revolution not been implemented? Why have officials and leaders of the clergy and the administrators of religious matters not undertaken the amendment of the internal situation of the clergy? Why have they used that message, like his eminence's other message, as a cover to continue their deviant path, alienating the compassionate and faithful clergymen who have a great role in the revolution?

Of course, the imam himself foresaw this in the message. It was not his intention that, on the very day after the message was announced, there should be a sudden revolution in the seminaries. It is not right to expect that immediately after the imam's words one would witness an automatic disappearance of the evil things in seminaries, the growth of good things, with all problems resolved. No, a message of the imam is not a legal command to the effect that you must do a certain thing; one, two, three, do this, do that. The imam is giving guidance. He is teaching us. We must open our minds, understand, adopt the correct interpretation. That is the imam's intention.

No, on the contrary. I believe that, fortunately, the initial reactions to the imam's message in the seminaries were positive reactions, good reactions; especially the fact that all the groups in the seminaries announced a joint march. They exchanged declarations. They moved together. That was a very good thing, and we hope, God willing, that the message will fully fall into place.

Question: Why are conceited and deceitful jurisconsults opting for silence in connection with "The Satanic Verses" affair and the valuable message of the great leader of the revolution? Why have they not declared their hatred of the book? Is the defense of the honor of the messenger of God and beloved Islam not a requirement for the jurisconsults?

Those jurisconsults you mention are not in favor of the imam's and our Islam; they have made the religious law a flag under which they can crush revolutionary Islam. They are the ones who have accused all the combatant, compassionate, pure-hearted clergy of the past, who did not even have any expectations with respect to their struggles, material expectations; they accused them all of Wahhabism. What do you expect from such people? [passage omitted] Do not expect anything from them. It is really not possible to expect anything from them. [passage omitted]

The next question: If, in connection with an important decision, there is disagreement between the rule of the jurisconsult and all the officials and the Assembly of Experts, what is the duty of the system's authorities?

There are two possibilities: One is that the jurisconsult issues a command. In that case, his command is binding for everyone, even for theological experts, even for the system's top-ranking officials. When he commands something should be done, his command is binding. The second possibility is that the jurisconsult seeks advice. I remember in the early days of the revolution we went to see his eminence the imam. I went with the officials of the provisional government, those liberals, those liberal brothers who were working with us. There were discussions about some matters. We had all come from Tehran; the late Beheshti and us; we were all there. Each one of us offered an opinion. The imam, for his part, listened to everyone's opinion. Eventually, everyone accepted one idea, and the imam affirmed the idea and said it should be implemented. When we left, they said: How amazing! We did not imagine that the imam would be so open to advice. We said: You did not imagine a great many other things either, and you still cannot imagine many things. That is the reality. The imam is very open to advice. [passage omitted]

It would be a good idea for me to bring this session to a close, to say a few prayers. I would be grateful if you would say, amen. [passage omitted] May God's peace and blessings be upon you all.

Lavasani Goes to Moscow With Velayati Message

LD1603125689 Tehran IRNA in English 1250 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 16, IRNA—Deputy Foreign Minister for International Affairs Hoseyn Lavasani heading a delegation left here for Moscow Thursday with a message from Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati for his Soviet counterpart Eduard Shevardnadze.

The aim of the visit is to follow up agreements concluded between the two countries during a visit to Tehran of the Soviet foreign minister in February and to coordinate mutual cooperation in regional and international affairs.

Lavasani is scheduled to hold talks with high ranking Soviet officials on Tehran-Moscow ties and other issues of mutual interest.

Velayati Urges UN To Force Iraqi Withdrawal

LD1603140789 Tehran IRNA in English 1405 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 16, IRNA—Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati has called on U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar to take necessary action to force Iraq to pull out its forces from Iranian territory.

In a letter to the U.N. chief recently, Velayati warned "no real progress will be made in the (U.N.-mediated) peace talks unless Iraqi troops retreat to internationally-recognized border."

Pointing to the occupation of more than 2,000 square kms of Iranian territory by Iraqi troops, Velayati said 125 kms of the lands had been occupied following Iran's acceptance of the U.N. Resolution 598.

He also rejected a claim by the Baghdad regime in a letter to the U.N. chief on February 8 that it had no Iranian territory under occupation, as a move aimed at "deceiving public opinion."

The foreign minister reiterated Iran's commitment to achieving an honorable and lasting peace in the region on the basis of the Security Council Resolution 598 and the 1975 Algiers Accord.

Foreign Ministry Statement on Halabjah Bombing

NC1703075389 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] The Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran issued a statement on the anniversary of the Iraq's bestial crime: the chemical bombing of Halabjah. Part of this statement says: One year ago today, the Iraqi regime perpetrated a heinous atrocity and martyred a few thousand Muslim Kurdish men, women, and children in Halabjah with chemical gases. Unfortunately, international organizations and countries which are the so-called champions of human rights did not take the necessary punitive or categorical measures against this dastardly crime. The silence of the Iraqi regime's supporters, especially of most European countries, which had made materials for such weapons available to the Iraqi regime, was the reason why these weapons were used again against the Kurdish people in northern Iraq last summer, only 5 months after the Halabjah catastrophe.

In its statement, the Foreign Ministry called upon all noble people of the world to express their hatred of this inhuman act by keeping alive the memory of Halabjah's oppressed martyrs who were dragged into blood and dust in a cowardly manner.

The Majlis deputies also issued a statement on the occasion paying homage to the memory of the martyrs of the Halabjah chemical bombing disaster. This statement says: The silence of international organizations, even of the chemical disarmament conference in Paris which had been convened to assess the dimensions of this criminal use of chemical weapons, invalidates all the conference's claims to defend human rights. In its statement, the Majlis deputies called on all freedom-loving peoples of the world to exert all their efforts for their own safety and that of all oppressed people from the domination of tyrants.

Further Details on Statement

LD1703095589 Tehran IRNA in English 0918 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 17, IRNA—Iran's Foreign Ministry Thursday lashed out at Iraq's supporters and those international organisations which failed to condemn Baghdad for its repeated deployment of chemical weapons.

The attack came in a statement issued by the ministry on the first anniversary of the Halabjah genocide which took the lives of over 5,000 innocent Kurdish people and maimed another 5,000. Iraq chemically bombed its own people in Halabjah after the Kurdish town was liberated by Iranian forces in March.

The statement said the horrid crime, which received extensive press coverage in the world, did not prompt firm action and proper punishment against its culprit, by international organisations and "the so-called supporters of human rights." This, the statement regretted, encouraged the Iraqi regime to continue its crimes even after the Halabjah tragedy.

Thousands of more Iraqi Kurds fell victims to Baghdad's inhuman chemical war after the acceptance of the U.N. Security Council Resolution 598 by Iran in July last year, which provided the Ba'thist army with an opportunity to suppress Kurdish dissidents.

"Iraq's backers, particularly certain European countries which supplied it with the materials for (manufacturing) these weapons, not only did it not cease their support but further encouraged it to renew its crimes, by their silence and after failing to take deterrent measures. A vivid example was the Saddam regime's renewed deployment of chemical weapons against Kurdish people in the north of that country last summer, that is five months after the Halabjah catastrophe."

The statement also regretted that the Paris conference on chemical weapons in January had failed to take action against those breaching the Geneva protocol banning the use of the lethal gases.

The Foreign Ministry called on the freedom-loving people of the world to keep alive the memory of the Halabjah martyrs and voice their hatred towards this inhuman act.

In a letter marking the same occasion, Majlis deputies censored [as received] international organisations which claimed to be defending human rights for their silence towards "this brutal act of Iraqi regime."

Editorial on Saddam Husayn POW Exchange Plan

NC1503130189 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 8 Mar 89 p 2

[Editorial: "Saddam's Whimsical Ways With Resolution 598"—from the "Opinion" column]

[Text] Again Iraqi President Saddam Husayn, as is his wont, has come up with a suggestion that circumvents U.N. Security Council Resolution 598—the idea being that the less this is mentioned the better for the Iraqi regime. The resolution, as is only too well known, set down the terms last August for a cease-fire between Iran and Iraq and sketched out in some detail the manner in which the subjects that are the cause of conflict between the two nations be settled.

The latest of Husayn's suggestions is that there be a no-holds-barred exchange of prisoners of war between the two countries. The reports carrying the offer suggested that Husayn has moved outside and beyond the framework of Resolution 598 to make his "humanitarian" gesture of prisoner exchanges. Even if we may concede some "humanity" to the Iraqi president, we still fail to understand why the insistence on calling it a move away from Resolution 598, when the very second clause of the resolution stipulates resolving the question of prisoners of war held by either side. We are very suspicious of his motives and wonder what the Iraqi president has in mind. What gives us good reason to suspect his motives is his determination to shuffle the order of the Resolution 598, so that it will be to Iraq's advantage and to draw out the process as far and for as long as he possibly can.

No doubt Husayn has timed the proposal to gain political advantage in the short-term; he wishes to derive the maximum benefit from the problems between Iran and the West. His appeal to this "humanitarian" exchange may serve the purpose of defusing global political pressure on his regime.

A second motive perhaps is to leave a negative impact on a meeting scheduled between the foreign ministers of the two countries to be held in New York at the end of this month. The meeting is to be held under the auspices of the U.N. Secretary General Perez de Cuellar. Now grand proposals like the one Saddam Husayn makes serve one purpose only: to depit him as a meek lamb of peace, while in fact he is a leopard with an "anti-peace" covering, as one can easily see in his dealings with the United Nation peace moves.

A third possible motive that we ascribe to Iraq is to preempt Iranian requests—made several times already—to have Resolution 598 implemented in its correct order and expeditiously and without delay. Iraq knows very well that this very proposal on prisoner exchanges can bog down both side in prolonged talks; the logic of the situation ensures this. Iraq reportedly has only some 30 to 35,000 prisoners in Iraq while Iran holds almost 70,000 Iraqi prisoners, double the number held by Iraq. Families of POW's in Iraq must surely be asking the Iraqi regime for their loved ones' return. What better way for Husayn to appease them than this, while it serves his other ulterior motives.

In the long-term, however, Husayn wants to put off the fateful day when he will be adjudged the aggressor in the war, because when Article 6 of Resolution 598 is taken up it will settle this question. Therefore, it is better to do away with his nemesis, as distantly as possible and by every statagem the Iraqi leader can conceive.

Then we fail to understand too how Husayn can so blithely move on to Article 2 of the resolution which takes up prisoner exchanges, when there is still a stalemate over Article 1 of the very same resolution, which calls for return to territorial borders of either country by all troops at the fronts. The Iraqi regime has been adamant on the very first article of the resolution and does not want to budge. No wonder then that Husayn has chosen so generously to go beyond the terms of the U.N. resolution. Why not move on to Article 6 instead? Iran surely will welcome this and maybe the two nations can always see eye to eye after this.

Or does the Iraqi regime, and Husayn in particular, who is its captain, now like to see U.N. Resolution 598 made null and void and thus avoid the last judgment which has inevitably to come?

Besharati Meets With Lebanon's Shaykh Sha'ban

LD1603112889 Tehran IRNA in English 1044 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 16, IRNA—Leader of Lebanese Islamic Tawhid [Unification] Movement Shaykh Sa'id Sha'ban said here Wednesday that Imam Khomeyni's fatwa [religious decree] on Salman Rushdie has recalled a forgotten responsibility of Muslims. He made the comment in a meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati. He said when the imam saw God's religion being sacrileged he acted in the interest of Islam.

Besharati reiterated Iran's support for the campaign of Lebanese people and Afghan mujahidin and declared Iran's readiness to help solve these problems.

Jannati Comments on Tour of Persian Gulf States

LD1603190389 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Jannati, supervisor of the Islamic Propaganda Organization, who travelled to Abu Dhabi, Oman, North and South Yemen, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, and Al-Sharjah to deliver a message from President Khamene'i to the heads of the region's states and emirates, in an interview today described the content of the president's message to the heads of these countries and emirates. He said the message concerned the cultural conspiracy of the West against Islam emphasized brotherly relations between Islamic countries.

While calling his trip a success, Jannati remarked: The heads of these countries all agreed that the publication of "The Satanic Verses" is a new plot hatched against Islam. Of course, they are not ready to seriously confront this issue in the way that we want them to, but they have declared their readiness to condemn it or prevent its publication in their countries. Jannati added: The religious decree of his eminence the imam had a very good effect on world Muslims, in particular the region's Muslim people.

Editorial on Protests Against 'Satanic Verses'

NC1603203089 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 11 Mar 89 p 2

[Editorial: "Banish 'The Satanic Verses' Forever"; from the "Opinion" column]

[Text] Parliament Speaker Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani yesterday once more suggested a way to bury the Salman Rushdie affair for ever. Speaking at Friday prayers in his sermon the senior official addressing the West said that the only way to satisfy over one billion Muslims across the world would be to burn all copies of "The Satanic Verses" and ban it for ever.

We believe that Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani gave another chance to the West to think seriously about the deep impact of the Western support to a novel which has enraged the Muslims and created a political dilemma between Muslims as a whole and the Western governments.

It is really unfortunate that the West failed to understand the deep feelings of the Muslims about their religion and their firm determination in the way of keeping the Islamic sanctities intact. The Muslims never in history have tolerated any insult to their Islamic values. If any such unfortunate incident happened the Muslims have always resorted with all their might to counter this and they never compromised on this issue.

Keeping the Islamic values intact the Muslims were, are, and will, be ready to sacrifice their lives and properties. And no relations and no interests however important they may be can ever be a barrier in their way.

If Britain and its allies consider that political blackmail can work in this issue then they are wrong. It is not a question of Iran or any other single country. It is a matter of Islam which is followed by over one billion Muslims who will continue their protests as long as this satanic book exists in any corner of the world.

The leader of the Islamic Republic Imam Khomeyni just performed his simple Islamic duty when last month he issued fatwa [religious decree] for the execution of Rushdie who is the author of this novel. This fatwa will remain valid until its cause exists. [sentence as published]

Today the West is seeing Iran at the front of the protest against this satanic plot and tomorrow more countries will join the Iranian ranks because the peoples of other countries will definitely put pressures on their governments and these governments are bound to follow what Iran is now doing.

So better the West revise its stand on the issue and sincerely try to understand the adverse impact of Western support to this plot. Otherwise, as Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said, if the issue stays, it will remain forever a source of rebellion and it would be impossible that peace comes between real Muslims and the supporters of this book. This book is being sponsored, supported and encouraged on pretext of espousing the "freedom of expression".

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani also warned the West that if they failed to find a suitable solution to the problem no one knows where it will lead to. The West and the supporters of the book should consider the words of Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani carefully, coolly and objectively.

Commentary Urges Review of Ties With France

NC1603222389 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 12 Mar 89 p 3

[D. Elimi commentary: "Iranian-French Ties Should Be Subject to Serious Review"]

[Text] French parliament member and former Premier Laurant Fabius has, in a recent address, attacked the leader of the Islamic revolution Imam Khomeyni, vehemently criticizing him for his fatwa (religious decree) calling for the execution of Salman Rushdie, author of "The Satanic Verses."

French stand on the Salman Rushdie case has been indeed one of rashness and hyperbole. Paris actually trespoassed all diplomatic norms in reacting to the Islamic Republic's stance on the issue.

Some high-ranking French officials made no bone to unmask their deep spite toward Imam Khomeyni by flaying the imam's religious decree not in any presentable way but by insulting him with indecent and vile language.

In a decade following Iran's Islamic revolution, France has time and again proven untrustworthy. For instance, during the Iraq-Iran war, France served as Iraq's major arms supplier. It even provided the Baghdad regime with pilots and military experts to attack economic and military targets inside Iran.

By placing Exocet missiles at Iraq's disposal, France heightened the Persian Gulf crisis as a consequence of which non-military ships came under attack.

On the political plane, too, Paris did not adopt any friendly stance towards Iran. In the so-called "War of Embassies" in 1987, it was France that put a siege on Iran's Paris Embassy. The French regime also missed no chance to give Iraq all the covert and overt support it could in the Security Council.

It must also be borne in mind that France gave ample political and military provisions to Iraq at a time it had placed Iran under a complete arms embargo.

But French hostilities did not just end there; economic pressures were also employed to stymie Iran. The French delay in repaying the balance of its long-due loan of U.S.$1 billion to Iran despite Iran's legal actions is a clear indication of France's hostility. Iran, however, has not been the only target of French irrational and double standard diplomacy. For instance, France launched a diplomatic shenanigan for the release of its hostages in Lebanon. Despite its pledge to Lebanese Moslem groups to free Anis Naqqash, Paris has never made good its promise todate, while the Lebanese side did release French hostages.

In the case of Rushdie's scandalous blasphemy of Islamic sanctities too, given the ample support meted by the Rocard government to "The Satanic Verses," it should be realized that France did so out of a so-called commitment to defend freedom of expression and of thought. It rather seized upon the opportunity to insult the leader of the Islamic revolution by abusive language.

Based on the above considerations, it would not be out of point at all for Iran to make its diplomatic and economic ties with France subject to a serious review. In so doing, Tehran should avoid vague and ambiguous political considerations by all means.

Turkey's Decision To Ban Islamic Garb Assailed

NC1603210889 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 12 Mar 89 p 11

[Editorial: "Evren Is Testing His Strength Against the People!"]

[Text] Following a request by Turkish President Kenan Evren, a decision adopted by Turkey's higher education organization on allowing girl students to wear Islamic garb in universities was rejected by the Turkish constitutional court.

In Dey [month ending 20 January 1989] this year, Turkey's higher education organization issued a decision allowing the use of Islamic garb in the universities, following a series of protests by Muslims and Muslim students.

This freedom was announced at a time when a bill on it had been vetoed by Evren. However, the Turkish Parliament sent the bill back to him with some changes. According to the Turkish Constitution the president can exercise his right of veto once; therefore, he had to sign the bill. Meanwhile, Evren threatened to ask the constitutional court for the abrogation of this bill.

Evren considers that Islamic garb goes against Ataturk's doctrine and believes that it is contrary to secular (non-religious) principles.

Even though there is some basis to Mr Evren's views, one should see whether the Muslims of Turkey, who form the great majority of Turkish society, believe in the secular policy and in Ataturk's doctrine. And if they do not, then how much does Turkey's democracy, according to the president, respect this opinion?

The Turkish prime minister has a different opinion from that of the Turkish president. He says: "We, who follow a Western-style democracy, should not oppose individual freedom."

Apparently these two differing opinions should be discussed against the background of the concern felt by Turkey's high-ranking officials in relation to the EEC's acceptance or non-acceptance of their country, and in relation to the loss of the profitable markets of the Islamic countries.

Entering the EEC has become the major desire of some Turkish officials. They are aware that as long as the roots of Islam appear to hold strong in their country, the Europeans will consider their presence among them as unsuitable and will prevent their entry into the EEC.

Apparently, until before the Salman Rushdie problem and the worldwide opposition of the Muslims to this Western plot, the Turks were taking effective and, at the same time, quiet steps toward ridding Turkey of Islam. However, the opposition that spread among the Muslims of Turkey to Rushdie and "The Satanic Verses," as well as the strong reaction against Rushdie by the religious leaders of that country, actually neutralized the propaganda of the secular regime; and it appears that the attempt to ban Islamic garb in the universities is actually a measure designed to gain the favors of the EEC, Salman Rushdie's main mentor.

In view of this, the demonstrations by the Muslims and the opposition by the Muslim students of Turkey to the ending of the freedom to wear Islamic garb in that country's universities, coupled with the unity that has emerged in Turkey among the Turkish Muslims in condemning the plot of Salman Rushdie's book, manifest, more than ever before, the fact that Islam is alive and well in that country. It is not clear how much the president can resist this strong popular wave, because this phenomenon is, above all else, tantamount to a test of strength by the president of Turkey against the people of that country.

Musavi Appoints Taheriyan Deputy Prime Minister
LD1603162189 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Prime Minister Mir Husayn Musavi today appointed Mr Mohammad Taheriyan deputy prime minister and supervisor of the Foundation for the Affairs of the Self-Sacrificing Devotees.

In the appointment letter, Mr Musavi wished him success in serving Islam and Muslims, particularly the dear, self-sacrificing devotees of the Islamic Revolution.

Aqazadeh Reports New Oil Finds in Persian Gulf
LD1603160789 Tehran IRNA in English 1235 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 16, IRNA—Iran has discovered new continental shelf oil resources in the Persian Gulf waters which shares those in the southern coast of the Persian Gulf with the littoral states, said Oil Minister Gholamreza Aqazadeh here Thursday.

Speaking at a press conference attended by foreign and domestic reporters he said the discoveries were made following satisfactory marine seismic operations in four regions of the Iranian waters opposite Ra's al-Khaymah, Dubai, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

Based on the discoveries the "Saleh" oil reserves in Ra's al-Khaymah waters, "Fallah" in Dubai and natural gas reserves in Qatar are shared with Iran.

As for the operations in the waters opposite Saudi Arabia in Low'low and Esfandiar, he said investigation were still underway and thorough information was not yet available.

Aqazadeh told reporters that marine seismic operations in Sirri region in Iranian waters are indicative of high potential of oil reserves in the region to a point that its output could be boosted by 10,000 bpd [barrels per day].

The Iran-Qatar natural gas reserves are the largest in the world, Aqazadeh said adding that experts have estimated it between 6-10 trillion cubic feet and stretching 20 kms deep inside the Iranian waters.

Giving more details about the continental shelf operations he said they were carried out with the assistance of a Dutch company along a line of 4,700 kms.

According to the oil minister operations in Kheyrabad in Gachsaran in southern Iran, has led to discovery of a new oil reserve.

The total yield from the continental shelf is 230,000 bpd which is expected to exceed 700,000 in the next three or four years.

As for the operations in the Caspian Sea, he said the preliminary work has been completed and the needed derricks will be installed in the next few months.

On talks with Japanese companies of Imam Khomeyni port petrochemical complex, he said negotiations are underway in a friendly atmosphere and the final results will be known in the next few months.

Aqazadeh stressed that no change has taken place in Iran's oil agreements with the European Community.

As for export of natural gas to the Soviet Union he said full understanding prevailed over the issue and exports will be resumed in future upon completion of the operations.

Aqazadeh urged members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting countries (OPEC) to abide by their assigned quotas stressing that Iran stood by the OPEC decisions. He did not confirm news reports that OPEC's production ceiling had been violated.

On rehabilitation of Iranian oil industries and ways of funding them, he said the Majlis has sincerely cooperated in providing the needed foreign exchange and upon approval of the next year's budget bill, now being discussed in the Majlis, the reconstruction will be speeded up.

According to Note 37 of the bill the ministry will be allowed to use revenues from the sale of up to 50,000 bpd of crude oil for reconstructing oil installations and fields. They are the Persian Gulf fields of Resalat, Reshadat, Dorud, Foruzan, Hendijan, Sirri, Nosrat oil field and export jetties in Kharg.

Budget Minister on Defense Funds for Next Year
NC1603220389 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 11 Mar 89 pp 1, 3

[Text] Tehran—Iran's budget for the next year (1989-1990) makes ample provision for defense in the event of a resumption of the war, a high-ranking official said here recently.

In an exclusive interview with the TEHRAN TIMES, the minister of budget and planning, Mas'ud Roghani Zanjani said during the past two years Iran has worked out plans for reconstruction and the plans have been presented to the government for implementation.

He said promotion of economic and social plans were slated with the establishment of eight councils including those for agriculture, water, energy, housing and construction, transportation, communication, and so forth.

On self-sufficiency in certain agricultural goods, the minister noted that in the five-year plan, Iran has envisaged clear targets for high growth in essential agricultural goods so that Iran becomes self-sufficient, particularly in wheat and barley in the next 10 years.

Zanjani said the five-year plan has envisaged a six percent growth rate for agricultural sector as a whole and pointed out that by the end of the plan the added value of the farm sector will be around rials 190 billion.

Zanjani said since Iran is in state of "neither peace nor war," and the enemy might attempt to move against the Islamic Republic again, the budget bill seeks to province ample funds for the defense sector. If the bill is ratified, the government will give a blank check to the acting commander in chief of the Armed Forces to utilize the allocations for defense purposes.

But, if the war resumes, Zanjani added, all facilities will be placed at the disposal of the commander in chief of the Armed Forces.

He said extensive plans are underway for reconstruction of war-damaged Armed Forces facilities. The minister said some rials 510 billion have been allocated to the defense initiative for the next year, a figure showing considerable decrease as compared with last year.

Zanjani noted that a rational taxing system can effectively solve the country's financial problems as failure of the private sector to pay taxes can create a budget deficit and may entail borrowing from the Central Bank.

On the question of war refugees, Zanjani said the government does not propose settling them in other cities. He said the plan envisages returning refugees to the areas from where they came in so that they will be able to participate fully in reconstruction projects for their resettlement.

He said the budget will includes provisions for new investements and reconstruction for facilities earmarked in projects for prompt execution. He said with these provisions the bill will allow ample scope to the executive organizations to go ahead with their plans.

Zanjani expressed his opposition to the idea of resorting to foreign loans as long as the purpose for such loans and the manner in which they will be contracted and their terms are thoroughly defined. He said it would be better to explain the reasons for shortages to the people and not go go in for foreign loans as long as the goals are not clearly defined.

He said if the Majlis (Parliament) grants permission for foreign loans, it must ask the government for specific plans, and loans would then be taken under the supervision of the heads of the executive, judiciary, and legislature. He further added that in case Iran decides to go in for foreign loans, priority will be given to energy, petrochemicals, mines and mining, and heavy industry.

1987-88 Economic Report Details Growth

LD1603194989 Tehran IRNA in English 1920 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 16, IRNA—General economic situation of the country in the last Iranian year (ended March 20, 1988) was reviewed during the 28th annual session of the Central Bank Wednesday.

According to a report released at the end of the session, despite enemy air raids on oil installations, production and exports increased bringing in revenues.

Relative increase was seen in the activities of the agricultural sector during the year when wheat production, despite drought in western parts, rose by 0.6 percent, barley by 9 percent and rice by 1.1 percent. However, production of crops like beet, sugar cane and cereals reduced during the period.

In the industrial sector, production of minerals (excluding oil and coal), chemical products and wood products were up by 6.2, 4.4 and 3.3 percent respectively as compared with the previous year. As a result of encouraging policies of the government non-oil exports increased by 19.6 percent in total.

Preliminary statistics on exports and imports by the customs office registered an increase of 19.5 percent in terms of weight and 15.7 percent in terms of value during 1987-88 showing a total amount of 15.3 million tons worth 12.2 billion dollars.

Non-oil exports with a significant growth in weight and value were 1.2 million tons, worth 1.1 billion dollars.

During 1987-88, the banking system of the country could absorb more deposits from the private sector to increase the volume of its deposits by 19.9 percent, 1,605 billion rials (about dlrs. 23 billion), as compared to the previous year, said the report.

It added that prices of foodstuff, which consumes major part of the income of low-income families, had an increase of 30 percent during 1988-87, but the figure was limited to 16.7 percent last year.

International Narcotics Rings 'Destroyed'

LD1603190689 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Excerpts] The guards of the Islamic Revolution Committees, in heavy clashes in the eastern border regions of the country, have destroyed a number of major international narcotics rings. [passage omitted]

Also one of the largest international rings engaged in the production and distribution of narcotics which were active in Iranshahr, Chah-Bahar, and Hormozgan, was smashed and all the members of that ring were arrested. The Central News Unit reports that at the time of the arrest 630 kg of narcotics, including heroin, opium, and hashish, together with six vehicles were discovered and seized. Among those arrested are two well known smugglers and insurgents from the Piranshahr region.

Nepal

Position on Zone of Peace Proposal Reviewed

BK1103063789 Kathmandu THE RISING NEPAL in English 25 Feb 89 p 4

[Editorial: "Commitment To Peace"]

[Text] Nepal's commitment to peace both at home and in all regions of the world has been amply demonstrated by various initiatives it has taken for the cause of peace time and again. It was with this concern for peace that His Majesty the King in February 25, 1975 made a landmark proposal for Nepal to be declared a Zone of Peace [ZOP]. This day, February 25, therefore, is cherished by all Nepalese as an important and significant day in the annals of Nepalese history. Nepal firmly believes that rapid development can be achieved only in an atmosphere of peace and stability. It is with this belief in mind that Nepal has determinedly supported such proposals in different parts of the world and is seeking support for its own. It is indeed very heartening to see the number of countries supporting Nepal's Zone of Peace proposal growing day by day. The number of nations supporting the ZOP proposal reached the century mark when Norway became the one hundreth nation to support this proposal on December 19, 1988. The total number of nations now supporting the ZOP proposal has reached 106, which is more than two thirds of the total number of United Nations members. While one rejoices at the sheer number of countries that have endorsed the ZOP proposal, one should also not overlook the significance of the diversity of the nations from all continents that have supported this proposal. Countries developed and developing, countries from the North and from the South, countries aligned and non-aligned, countries from near and countries from far and countries with different political, social and cultural thoughts and practices have fully supported this peace proposition of Nepal. However, two close neighbouring countries, India and Bhutan, which both belong to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to which Nepal also belongs, have yet to endorse Nepal's Zone of Peace proposal. Similiarly the Soviet Union has also not supported this peace proposal, this being the only one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council yet to lend support to the ZOP proposal. It will not be untimely to say now, even after such a big majority of nations have expressed their support to Nepal, that diplomatic efforts must continue as enthusiastically as before to win over the support of the remaining countries, to join in with the majority that have so rightly endorsed Nepal's sacred proposition for peace.

Nepal's total commitment to peace, not only at home but in all parts of the world can be visibly reflected in its active participation for the cause of peace on various occasions. Therefore, the long association, which Nepal has had with the United Nations in its various peace keeping activities in different regions, including the present United Nation's peace keeping force in Lebanon, is ample proof that Nepal had done all it can for the preservation of peace and is still doing so with total dedication. Nepal's peace initiatives in all parts of the world and its sagacious Zone of Peace proposal all indicate the high priority Nepal has accorded to peace without which it believes that development cannot take place. So as we strive for development in the country and even as so many countries of the world are supporting the Zone of Peace proposal, we should all solemnly rededicate ourselves for the cause of peace at home and in all parts of the world.

Pakistan

Official on Talks With USSR for Atomic Plant

BK1603160389 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Talks are being held between Pakistan and the Soviet Union for acquiring an atomic reprocessing plant to overcome the energy problem in the country. Speaking to newsmen in Lahore today, the minister of state for production, Raja Shahid Zafar said this. He said during the recent visit of the Soviet foreign minister, the prime minister had discussions with him on this issue. The Soviet foreign minister had assured that his government would consider this issue. He said he will lead a high-level delegation to the Soviet Union by the 2d week of May for more talks in this connection.

Says 'Misquoted' on Atomic Plant

BK1703163689 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1600 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] The minister of state for production, Raja Shahid Zafar, has clarified that he has been misquoted in a section of the press as having said that agreements have been reached between Pakistan and the Soviet Union on the supply of an atomic reprocessing plant. In a statement in Islamabad today, the minister said this was not true. What he had said was that Pakistan is in need of assistance to overcome its energy problem and it would welcome such assistance from any quarter.

Soviet Withdrawal From Wakhan Corridor Demanded

BK1103151589 Karachi NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 18 Feb 89 p 10

[Editorial: "Wakhan—A Perpetual Danger"]

[Text] A Foreign Office spokesman has demanded that the Soviet Union must also withdraw its troops from the Wakhan Corridor. Pakistan's demand came at a time when a United Nations report claimed that the Soviet Union had completed the withdrawal of its troops from Afghanistan by 15 February in accordance with the Geneva accords. The UN report also claimed that the

UN observers had been monitoring the program of Soviet withdrawal since May last year, and that the implementation of the Geneva accords had been completed with the total Soviet withdrawal. But, contrary to this report, the apprehensions expressed by the Pakistani Foreign Ministry are not unfounded.

The Soviet leadership has always given the impression that they have withdrawn their troops from all parts of Afghanistan, excluding Wakhan; and Pakistan and the free world have called upon the Soviet Union to withdraw its troops from all parts of Afghanistan, including Wakhan. Actually, Wakhan area is of a special significance to the Soviet Union. If we look at the map of Afghanistan, its one corner looks like a very narrow strip of land, where borders of the Soviet Union, China, and Pakistan meet.

This treacherous mountainous region of the Karakoram range is covered with snow. But, if the Soviet Union occupies this area, it will cut off Afghanistan's land links with China as well as endanger the Karakoram Highway linking Pakistan and China. And if Indian troops are making aggressive advances in the Siachen Glacier area, just opposite the Wakhan Corridor, one can very well understand the entire scheme.

In fact, with their collusion and joint planning, the Soviet Union and India want to cut off Pakistan from its great neighbor and friend, China, as they cannot tolerate the benefits that China and Pakistan are currently reaping from the Karakoram Highway.

India is unjustifiably occupying the Siachen Glacier region which is not a disputed territory like Kashmir, but a part of Pakistan's northern areas; and in doing so, India has crossed the international border, which is tantamount to a war against Pakistan. Pakistan, with its limited resources, cannot afford to fight a defensive war in a snow-clad region thousands of feet high. However, the brave and courageous soldiers of the Pakistani Armed Forces have been performing their duties under very unfavorable conditions. The war in the Siachen Glacier region is proving expensive for India too; but if it is prolonging the war, it is quite obvious that it is implementing a long-term plan. And when the Soviet troops are still holding positions in the Wakhan area, it is not difficult to measure the depth of this abominable design.

Another example of the importance of Wakhan is that the land distance between the Soviet Union and Pakistan is very small in this region; and, if the Soviet forces are stationed in Wakhan, the Soviet fighter bombers face no obstacles when they take off from their bases in the Soviet territory, adjoining the Wakhan Corridor, to hit Pakistan.

During the 9 years of the Afghan war, Soviet aircraft carried out several aggressive operations in Pakistan's northern areas by flying across the Wakhan Corridor. And when a Soviet helicopter was forced to land in Chitral, the Soviet Union raised a hue and cry, saying that the helicopter had strayed from its path, although the helicopter was a part of the fleet deployed at a base situated in the Soviet territory adjoining Wakhan.

In this background, a permanent Soviet occupation of the Wakhan Corridor is the part of a deep conspiracy against Afghanistan, Pakistan, China, and against the entire region, and it is clearly linked with the Indian forces' aggression in Siachen. Pakistan should exert pressure on the Soviet Union through the United Nations to vacate the Wakhan Corridor and to free every inch of Afghanistan's soil under the Geneva accords. It is also expected that the Soviet Union will display some sense of reality and not adopt an intransigent policy again. The Afghan problem has already caused a lot of problems and difficulties for the Soviet Union and it should now end this story forever and pay attention to its own domestic problems.

Afghan Rebel Accused of Spying Released on Bail

BK1703111889 Hong Kong AFP in English
1053 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Quetta, Pakistan, March 17 (AFP)—Police have no proof that Farida Ahmadi, a well-known Afghan resistance figure who was released from prison here, was an agent of the Afghan Secret Police, a spokesman said Friday.

"They have no proof" that Ms Ahmadi was a KHAD agent, an official of the Revolutionary Association of Afghan Women (RAAW) said Friday, adding the affair had been a conspiracy hatched by extremist Afghan Moslem fundamentalists.

Ms Ahmadi, the president of the organization which demands more freedom for Afghan women, had been detained since February 3. She was released on bail Tuesday, official sources in this southeastern city said Friday.

The High Court of Quetta ordered the release Tuesday of six detainees on 75,000 rupees (about 4,000 U.S. dollars) bail each, but was investigating the charges of maintaining arms and carrying out "anti-social" activities, sources here said.

Pakistani police had suspected Ms Ahmadi, who had been detained and allegedly tortured by the KHAD for several months in 1981, of being a Soviet-trained KHAD agent herself, informed sources said. They arrested her and five family members including her husband, accusing them of forming a "band of foreign spies" for KHAD that possessed "arms, bullet-proof vests and devices for diffusing poison gas."

Ms Ahmadi attracted international attention in 1982 when, having fled to Pakistan after KHAD released her from prison in Kabul, she toured Europe and the United States giving emotional descriptions of how she had been arrested, detained and tortured. The accounts led to meetings with numerous world figures including then-U.S. President Ronald Reagan, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and Pope John Paul II.

Ms Ahmadi has denied the Pakistani police's accusations, saying that extremist rebel groups, particularly the radical fundamentalist Hezb-e Eslami faction of Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, were behind the "conspiracy" against her.

Observers here said the incident illustrates the muted but sometimes intense struggle that has been going on for several years among the different Pakistan-based mujahidin groups opposing the pro-Soviet Kabul regime: moderate and "progressive" factions such as Ms Ahmadi's RAAW are constantly at odds with fundamentalist factions.

Ms Ahmadi, at a press conference here Thursday, criticized the new mujahidin government, saying it would remain "unacceptable to women as long as they are not represented."

The mujahidin government, formed February 23 in Rawalpindi near Islamabad, which is dominated by Islamic fundamentalists, refused to create a Ministry for Women's Education. Fundamentalist parties have often accused RAAW of being infiltrated by the KHAD. The group has a hospital, three schools and artisans' workshops for Afghan refugees in Pakistan.

Fundamentalist mujahidin receive much more support than the moderate parties from the Pakistani Secret Service and Army, diplomatic sources say.

Yaqub Khan Hails Mujahidin Inclusion in ICO

BK1703025389 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Pakistan has appreciated the inclusion of the Afghan mujahidin in the ranks of Islamic nations, which will pave the way for an early and peaceful settlement of the Afghanistan problem. In a statement in Riyadh, Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan said the Islamic community's consistent support has played a vital role in keeping high the morale of the Afghan mujahidin.

Returns From Riyadh Meeting

BK1703063589 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0600 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan returned to Karachi this morning after attending the Islamic Conference Organization foreign ministers' conference in Riyadh. Talking to newsmen at the airport, he said the conference made a number of decisions for promoting economic, trade, scientific, technical, and cultural cooperation, which will prove very important for the welfare of the Islamic community.

Yaqub Khan said he took this opportunity to exchange views with foreign ministers of several Islamic countries on matters of mutual interest and that his meetings with them have been very useful in promoting mutual understanding and in strengthening friendly relations between Pakistan and other Islamic countries.

Japan To Provide Loans for Development Projects

OW1303072289 Tokyo KYODO in English 0612 GMT 13 Mar 89

[Text] Tokyo, March 13 KYODO—Japan will provide up to 50,297 million yen in loans to Pakistan to help stabilize its economy and finance development projects, the Foreign Ministry said Monday.

The loans from the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund will carry an annual interest rate of 2.5 percent and be repayable over a 30-year period, including a 10-year grace period.

Of the total, 18,268 million yen is earmarked for spending on metropolitan water supply projects and 4,915 million yen is allocated for financing construction of power lines and substations in the western province of Baluchistan.

Some 8,516 million yen will be used to expand and pave the Indus Highway and the remaining 18,598 million yen is to be spent on repairing a fertilizer factory.

The two countries exchanged diplomatic documents on the aid on Monday in Islamabad.

Sri Lanka

UNP Chief Organizer of Jaela Killed by Gunmen

BK1703115389 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 1128 GMT 17 Mar 89

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, Mar 17 (LANKAPUVATH)—The chief organiser of the United National Party (UNP) for Jaela, north of Colombo succumbed to his injuries last night after he was shot at by unidentified gunmen at his residence.

Police told LANKAPUVATH the victim, Bede Amerasekera, was in conversation with a friend when two unidentified gunmen suspected to be subversives, fired at them. Police said the death weapon was a T-56 automatic rifle. Mr Amerasekera's friend, too was injured and admitted to the general hospital.

Police said the incident occurred at 1945 hours (local time) yesterday.

Subversive Landmine Kills 2 Policemen, Wounds 5

BK1603122989 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 1155 GMT 16 Mar 89

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 16 Mar (LANKAPUVATH)—Two policemen were killed in Sri Lanka's Southern Province district of Matara this morning, when a jeep in which they were travelling was blown up by a landmine laid by subversives.

Police told LANKAPUVATH today that the victims were P.B.A. Halangoda, officer in charge of the Gandara police station and police sergeant Samarasena.

Police said the incident occurred at 0830 hours [0300 GMT], when policemen were returning to the Gandara police station from the Matara high court. The police vehicles were passing the village of Sudugalla, Kapugama and crossing a culvert at a bend on the road, when the landmine exploded. Five policemen were seriously wounded in the blast.

Eight suspects were arrested hours after the tragedy.

Police said the subversives had suffered severe losses in the Matara District recently. Thirteen subversives had been killed in encounters with the security forces during the last 2 days, while a substantial number had been captured during successful security operations.

IPKF Kills 9 'Terrorists' in North, East

BK1603121189 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 1151 GMT 16 Mar 89

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 16 Mar (LANKAPUVATH)—The Indian Peacekeeping Force [IPKF] continuing its offensive against terrorists in the north and east, killed nine cadres and succesfully raided a terrorist camp at Pulumalai.

Official sources told LANKAPUVATH that terrorists had fled after an exchange of fire, when the IPKF raided their hideout at Pulumalai in Batticaloa.

At Kirimichodai, two terrorists, Ganapathy Pulnandan Swamy and Chelladurai, were apprehended.

A report from Jaffna states that the IPKF had shot dead two hardcore terrorists Sebamalai Sebastian Pillai and Kandaswamy and seized two grenades, one cyanide capsule, and one motorcycle. Five suspected terrorists were apprehended at Navali, two at Periyavilam and two at Columbuthurai. Three hardcore terrorists were also shot dead by the IPKF in this town.

At Jaffna, Navaranaithan was shot dead by the IPKF and four battery cells and 20 metres of wire were seized.

In another operation in Jaffna, the IPKF shot dead Santhan, Charles and Kutty, seizing one AK-47 rifle, hand grenades, ammunition and LTTE documents.

Another terrorist Shridharan was captured by the IPKF at Kokuvil.

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